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THE

NATURE AND EXTENT

OF THE

Christian Dispensation,

WITH REFERENCE TO THE

SALVABILITY OF THE HEATHEN.

BY

EDWARD WILLIAM GRINFIELD, M.A.

" It cannot be imagined, that none can have the benefit of the General Redemption, but those, who have been made acquainted with it in the present life."—*Bishop Butler.*

" Firmly believe and doubt not at all, that not only all Pagans, but also all Jews, Heretics and Schismatics, who end the present life without the Catholic Church, shall go into the eternal fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels."

Bishop Beveridge on the 19th Article, from St. Augustine.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR C. & J. RIVINGTON,

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD,

AND WATERLOO-PLACE, PALL-MALL.

1827.

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LONDON:
PRINTED BY R. GILBERT,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

TO THE

INCORPORATED SOCIETY

FOR THE

Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

THIS ATTEMPT TO COMBINE

CHRISTIAN ZEAL WITH CHRISTIAN CHARITY,

IS

MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

AS

AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT

OF THE

WISDOM AND DISCRETION

OF ITS

MISSIONARY EXERTIONS.

BATH, Jan. 1, 1827.

[redacted]

Is Virtue, then, unless of Christian growth,
Mere fallacy, or foolishness, or both?
Ten thousand sages lost in endless woe,
For ignorance of what they could not know?
That speech betrays at once a bigot's tongue—
Charge not a God with such outrageous wrong!
Truly, not I—the partial light men have,
My creed persuades me, well employ'd, may save;
While he, that scorns the noon-day beam perverse,
Shall find the blessing, unimproved, a curse.
Let Heathen worthies, whose exalted mind,
Left sensuality and dross behind,
Possess, for me, their undisputed lot,
And take, unenvied, the reward they sought.
But still, in virtue of a Saviour's plea,
Not blind by choice, but destin'd not to see;
Their fortitude and wisdom were a flame
Celestial, though they knew not whence it came;
Derived, from the same source of light and grace,
That guides the Christian in his swifter race:
Their judge was conscience, and her rule their law,
That rule, pursu'd with rev'rence and with awe,
Led them, however falt'ring, faint, and slow,
From what they knew, to what they wish'd to know.

COWPER.

PREFACE.

THE subject of the present work has long and anxiously engaged the attention of the author. It was originally suggested to his mind, when occupied with his treatise on "the Connection of Natural and Revealed Theology;" but, from the extreme delicacy, as well as magnitude of the argument, it has been often laid aside, and as often resumed, under the conflicting feelings of its difficulty and its importance.

At length, the conviction of his duty has overcome these doubts and hesitations; and whatever be its reception, it is given to the public, as the honest and deliberate sentiments of one, who has devoted his days and nights to its constant meditation.

According to the most received computation, the population of the world is supposed to be as follows;—

Pagans	482,000,000
Mahommedans . .	140,000,000
Christians	175,500,000
Jews	2,500,000
Total	800,000,000

Assuming these proportions, the whole number of Christians, at the present time, constitute about one-fifth of the human race. But the world, having existed four thousand years before the Christian era, and none, but the Jews, till that time, having been favoured with a Divine revelation, it becomes extremely hazardous, if not impossible, to estimate the amazing majority of the Heathen, as compared with members of the Jewish, or Christian Church. Perhaps, it would not be an exaggeration, if it were stated, as not less than an hundred to a unit.

On the supposition, that Christianity is of Divine authority, a dispensation proceeding from the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Judge of the world, this is certainly a very startling consideration; and, accordingly, it has always been adduced by unbelievers, as presenting one of the strongest objections against its credibility. It is the object of the present work, to show, from a large induction of Scriptural facts, that this objection is altogether invalid, and that it does not apply to the scheme of Redemption through Jesus Christ.

But though, on the principles of this work, the most plausible objections of unbelievers are refuted, yet it is addressed peculiarly to those, who, not only profess to believe in revelation, but, who profess their attachment to the doctrine of Universal Redemption, as relative to the members of the Church; whilst they doubt or deny its effects on those, who are ignorant of the revelation.

The question, then, is, if we admit that

Christ died, *as the Saviour of the world*, whether we can exclude the great majority of mankind, in all ages, from the benefit of his atonement; and whether it be not, in fact, subversive of his Divinity to make the supposition. But there is another consideration, of scarcely less importance, which is, whether, if we assume as granted, that God conducts himself on the principles of equity and impartiality towards professing Christians, we can admit, that he has acted, on opposite principles, towards those, to whom the knowledge of the revelation has been denied.

In this question, the Calvinist, it is plain, enjoys a decided superiority over those, who profess to believe in the doctrine of Universal Redemption, but, who confine its effect to the members of the Christian Church. Their system is horrible, but it is consistent; we may denounce it as incredible, but we cannot charge it with contradiction. The Calvinist may, at least, boast of this advantage, that his principles extend over the whole world;

and that, whether with relation to Pagans, or Christians, the reign of arbitrary power, and of infinite irresponsibility is maintained. He rests his system solely on the edict of Omnipotence:—"Sic volo, sic jubeo, stat pro ratione voluntas."—But, not so the professor of Universal Redemption. He is continually enlarging on the love, the mercy, the equity of God, whilst he supposes that these attributes have lain dormant for ages with regard to the great majority of mankind. He admits, that God is infinitely good and gracious to all who call upon him *within* the pale of Christendom; but he thinks the same affirmation cannot be made, respecting those, to whom the tidings of the Gospel have *not* been addressed. A system thus fraught with inconsistence, doubt, and perplexity, cannot possibly stand its ground against the close and well-compacted scheme of the Genevan reformer. And, accordingly, the doctrines of Calvinism, somewhat softened and disguised, have been making rapid progress, amongst all classes and conditions of the

community. Its truth is either openly, or tacitly admitted, in nearly all our missionary exertions. The Heathen are continually spoken of, as *perishing*, without any possibility of escape; their eternal happiness is represented, as depending, on "the hope forlorn," of converting them before they die;—we are urged and exhorted to be kinder than Providence, and more liberal than Grace; and after all, we are surprised, that the sentiments and principles of Calvinism should be gaining ground amongst us.

Nor is this language confined to a few rash and unauthoritative writers, it is used by the gravest, and most learned of our advocates. What are the usual expressions on this subject? "We must leave them to the 'uncovenanted mercies' of God, 'Scripture is silent concerning them,' 'we dare not decide, where revelation is silent,'" &c. But is not this giving up the cause of *universal* redemption? As to the 'uncovenanted mercies' of God, I know of nothing in Scripture to authorize

the term. If *the world* has been redeemed by Christ, then, the covenant of God in Christ extends to "all the families of the earth." If this earth be the Mediatorial kingdom of Christ, then are all human beings, "Barbarians, Scythians, bond and free," without distinction, his subjects. There is here no room for neutrality, and "he who is not for us, is against us." To say, that the Scriptures are silent, on a point, which involves the whole character of our religion, is to affirm, what is, in the highest degree, improbable. But it is to place this question beyond all dispute, that I have brought the whole volume of Scripture to bear on its decision.

Without wishing, then, to make any direct attack on the principles of Calvinists, (for the rejection of the Heathen forms a component part of their system,) I address my labours chiefly to those, who believe, or profess to believe, that Christ has died for the sins of the whole world; and, upon their principles, I undertake to show, from

the whole history and tenor of the Bible, that the Heathen have been rendered capable of salvation, through the death of Christ; and that this is not a matter of doubtful speculation, nor of curious enquiry, not a hint to be hitched in a parenthesis, nor a conjecture to be whispered in an interrogation; but, that it is plainly declared in the Word of God; that it is involved, in all the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament, and is deducible from the actions of Christ, and the doctrines of his apostles.

But, whilst I thus profess to advocate the doctrine of universal redemption, in its largest, most comprehensive, and, as it appears to me, its only true and intelligible signification, as it relates *to all* mankind; let me not be thought to overlook the importance of the *revelation* of Christianity, nor to underrate the duty of endeavouring to spread this knowledge over Heathen countries. Born and educated amongst a class of Christians, who, above

all others, have been distinguished for their missionary exertions; I should, indeed, do the greatest violence to my principles, if I did not disclaim, in the most public and unreserved manner, the most distant desire to diminish that zeal for the conversion of the Heathen, which so honourably distinguishes the present age. The command, to preach the Gospel, is unquestionably divine, and, so far as it can be carried into effect, it is the paramount duty of all Christians, to give it their assistance and support. But, such a command requires no false exaggerations to render it binding on all, who love and value the knowledge of Christ. There is nothing, in the present argument, which can tend to render a Christian careless or indifferent to the advantages which he enjoys; it merely intimates, that our advantages, arising from the scheme of redemption, are not altogether exclusive. Even so it is, as Bishop Butler has observed, in our providential treatment. It is our duty, as far as we have the power, to spread the blessings of knowledge and civilization

over countries which are less favoured than our own; but we are not at liberty to infer, that savages and barbarians are excluded from the divine care and superintendance. *Analogy*, part ii. ch. vi.

Nor, is there any thing in the present work, which should lead any one to represent it as a question of comparative indifference, whether Christianity be received, or rejected by those, to whom it is addressed. As every one, on the principle of this argument, will be treated "according to that which he hath;" so, the knowledge of the Infidel and the ignorance of the Pagan must form the exact antipodes to each other. Grotius has long since remarked, that the evidence for Christianity was, in this view, *a touchstone* to try the sincerity of our minds; and that, perhaps, amidst the diversified modes of probation, that which peculiarly belongs to literary men, is the degree of calmness and attention, with which they estimate the doctrines and evidences of the Christian revelation, and the integrity with which they

bring them to operate on their hearts and lives.

To conclude, it is the general object and design of the present work to shew, that the principles of Christianity, as a divine dispensation, coincide with the acknowledged principles of moral science; that, as a scheme of mercy, it has provided for the wants of mankind in all ages and countries of the world; that its system is adapted to the endless diversities of our characters and conditions; and that, as we shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to receive according to things done in the body, whether they be good or evil; so, Christ, in his office, as our Creator, Redeemer, and Judge, bears the same universal and impartial relation to all mankind, whether they are acquainted or not with the history of our redemption.

"And now," to use the language of our great advocate for *the Liberty of Prophecying*,—"if men will still say, I persuade to indifferency, there is no help for me, for I

have given reasons against it; I must bear it as well as I can; I am not yet without remedy, as they are; for patience will help me, and reason will not cure them; let them take their course, I will take mine." *Bishop Taylor.*

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Tillotson's (Abp.) Works, 3 vols. ..... *Lond.* 1735
Tomline's (Bp.) Elements of Theology, 2 vols .. *Lond.* 1804
——— Refutation of Calvinism ..... *Lond.* 1811

Warburton's (Bp.) Divine Legation ..... *Lond.* 1765
Watts's Works, 9 vols. ..... *Leeds* 1812
——— Ruin and Recovery of Mankind ..... *Lond.* 1742
Whitby on the Five Points ..... *Oxford* 1816

N.B. For the sake of compression, I have found it necessary to shorten several of the quotations, and occasionally have brought distinct sentences together, to avoid extraneous matter. But, by the foregoing List, it will be easy for the reader to consult the original authors, by whom he will find the topics in general treated at much greater length.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

As it is the professed object of the present work to establish that as an essential doctrine of Christian Theology, which has hitherto been treated by some, as dubious and apocryphal, and by others, as a mere private and curious speculation; it is expedient, that, before we enter on its scriptural evidence, we should distinctly state the nature of the question, the principles on which it rests, and the general opinions which have been entertained concerning it.

As to the question, whether the benefits of Christ's Redemption extend to all the individuals of the human race, or whether they are to be confined exclusively to the members of the Christian Church; there can be no enquiry of more real importance, and none which is more intimately

connected with the moral and internal evidence for Christianity. It is quite in vain, I apprehend, for men to write or read the most elaborate or ingenious treatises on Natural Theology, or to study the analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion, so long as any doubt remains, whether the great majority of the human race are interested in "the only name which is given under heaven whereby we may be saved."

It is true, that many have condemned all such enquiries as fruitless, if not presumptuous. Thus the excellent Bishop Horne: "To the curiosity, which, negligent of its own interest in Christ, is ever anxiously enquiring into the future destination of those who have never heard of him, the proper answer, surely is, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." *Sermon on the Epiphany*, p. 145. But this, it should be remembered, is taking for granted the point, that the Scriptures have left us no information on this interesting topic. Not only so, it is, in some measure, misrepresenting the object of enquiry; which is, not as to the number of the Heathen

who *shall be saved*, but as to their universal capability of salvation through the Redemption of Christ.

For my part, I shall not disguise my opinion, that, if there has been but one Revelation from God to man, that Revelation must, in its virtues and effects, be designed for the common benefit of all; and that it is quite nugatory to enlarge on the love, the justice, and the equity of God, and then to exclude the great body of mankind from the means of salvation.

As to its being a merely curious enquiry, I answer, that nothing is merely curious, which concerns our reverence for the Divine Attributes, or which relates to the moral and spiritual happiness of our fellow-creatures:

Homo sum, humani nihil à me alienum puto.

When I look back upon past ages, and survey the multitudes of millions who lived and died before the Christian era; when I then contrast the wild wastes of heathen barbarism with the narrow limits of the Christian Church; when I carry forward

my views, and reflect, that, probably for ages to come, the great majority may still remain strangers and exiles from our communion; I feel myself bound, by every tie of nature and of grace, to examine whether the system of the Bible is not built on the history of the world, and whether it is not commensurate with the whole family of mankind.

And what is it which encourages this cheering expectation? It is surely this, that, if our Religion has proceeded from the one and only God, it must have been baptized into the divine attributes. If it be divine, it cannot be partial; if it be celestial, it cannot be local; if it proceed from Him "with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning;" as, it began with the origin of the human race, so must it comprehend all tongues and kindreds and nations and families, even to the end of the world.

The objections of infidelity can never be effectually refuted, till we take away the matter of such reasoning. No man is bound to believe that of his Maker, which

he would not dare to impute to any just or benevolent man. If you lay it down as a fundamental doctrine of the Gospel, that none can be saved but through the redemption of Christ, and that Christ is essentially divine; then, be assured, that either the redemption of Christ must be extended to the whole human race, or that the truth of the Gospel must be established on the sacrifice of all the divine attributes.

Hence it is, also, that our controversies with Calvinists have been attended with such dubious and imperfect success. What is it that we have been labouring to prove? That God's "*covenanted*" mercies are confined to the members of the Christian Church. Now, this is Calvinism in all its force to the great body of mankind; because it supposes, that God could treat them in the very same manner which the Calvinist supposes that he does treat all but some elect members of the Church. There is no rational hope of success against the Predestinarian, whilst we thus demolish the very foundation of Universal Re-

demption. Whilst the battle is fought merely amongst Christians and for Christians, the Calvinists, I think, will always possess a decided advantage; because you give them up the very point at issue, viz. That God is no respecter of persons, and that he does treat all men with equity and impartiality.

Let no man, therefore, view this question respecting the salvability of the heathen, as a mere question of curiosity; it stands connected with all our controversies with unbelievers, and with many of the controversies amongst ourselves. Thus, if the proper divinity of Christ is to be maintained against the Socinian, I am of opinion, that we must not only "strengthen our stakes, but lengthen our cords." The doctrine of Christ's divinity is most intimately connected with the question, whether "he is the Saviour of all men, as well as of them who believe." Once confine the benefits of his atonement to the members of the Church, and you destroy the foundation of his divinity. Did He *create*

only the members of the Church? Is he to be *the Judge* only of professing Christians?

It is surprising that this subject has not been viewed in all the extent of its importance;—but too many are fond of a little corporate religion, and they seem to think, that, in the same proportion as they can prove their privileges to be exclusive, in the same degree do they demonstrate their value. And thus, because there are many valuable privileges annexed to the profession of Christianity, there are not a few who consign the heathen to certain and inevitable perdition. Others affect to know nothing about their situation, and at the very moment they are advocating the doctrine of Universal Redemption against Calvinists, they confine this Universal Redemption to the Members of the Christian Church, that is, to about one in a hundred of all who have existed. Others, whilst they avow that there is no salvation, but through Christ, make them over to "the uncovenanted mercies" of God. Now, it is against such wavering, inconsistent, and

contradictory behaviour, that I enter my protest. Let the doctrine of Universal Redemption either be given up, or let it be supported as it relates to all mankind. Let us no longer fight the battle with Calvinists, as if we could separate our interests from the great body of our fellow-creatures; and let us found our hope of redemption, not upon any partial or exclusive privileges, but on that Covenant to redeem the world which was made with God in Christ from before the foundation of the world, but which has been manifested to us in these last times.

"I speak of the dispensation of Christianity," says Paley, "as distinct from Christianity itself. The dispensation *may* already be universal. That part of mankind which never heard of Christ's name, *may*, nevertheless, be redeemed. That is, placed in a better condition with respect to their future state by his intercession; *may* be the objects of his benignity, as well as of the propitiatory virtue of his passion." *Natural Theology*, p. 530.

As it is on this important distinction be-

tween the *Dispensation* of Christianity, and its *Revelation*, that our present argument is built; I shall beg leave to point out its truth and reality, and to assign my reasons why the timid and hypothetical language of Paley and other writers, should hereafter be exchanged for a more definite and decided avowal.

And first, as it is the doctrine of Scripture, "that God created all things by Jesus Christ,"—"that he is the head of all things, and that by him all things do consist," it will follow, that this world is the Mediatorial kingdom of Christ, and that, as "the one Mediator between God and man," he bears the same relation to the whole human race.

On the admission, that Christ is the Creator, the Saviour and the Judge of all men, it will follow, that Christianity, *as a system* and *Dispensation*, has always been in the world, and that it is the only channel of communication between heaven and earth. Admitting the truth of these facts and transactions, the consequences arising from them are quite independent of the

knowledge or ignorance of individuals; the unconsciousness of infancy, and the ignorance of barbarism cannot affect them any more than they can affect the existence of the Deity. The Gospel is founded on matters of fact, which facts have an unlimited and immutable reference to all men. *See Butler's Analogy. Part* II. *ch.* I. *Sect.* 2.

Secondly, that the system or dispensation of the Gospel is not dependent on its historical Revelation, is plain from the whole series of prophecies and promises concerning it, extending from the creation of the world to the end of time. Whatever might be the knowledge or ignorance of the Patriarchs, and of others under the Jewish economy; we are expressly told, that they were saved in virtue of those promises which they had not received, but which they beheld afar off. *Heb.* xi.

The whole of St. Paul's reasoning concerning the priority of the promise to the Jewish law, and of its reference to the Gentile world, proceeds on the same distinction. See *Gal.* iii. 17.

And here, let me observe, that when the

Scriptures of the Old or New Testament speak of the *Gentiles*, they speak of "all the families of the earth," and not of the *converted* Gentiles, or Christians only, as is commonly understood. The Jews, it is true, under the term Gentiles (גּוֹיִם) concealed the bitterest sentiment of reproach. But we are, by no means, authorized to follow them in such narrow prejudices; and indeed, it would be absurd to do so, because we should thus be necessarily reproaching ourselves. "Is he the God of the Jews only, is he not of the Gentiles also?" *Rom.* iii. 29. "When the Gentiles which have not the law do, by nature, the things contained in the law; these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves." *Rom.* ii. 14. Under the term "Jew and Gentile," or "Jew and Greek," the whole body of mankind are denoted in the New Testament. Let my reader, therefore, remember, that the term *Gentile* as opposed to *Jew*, implies no matter of necessary reproach, but that it merely designates a line of descent.

Lastly, that the dispensation of the Gospel is independent of its Revelation, is plain from several declarations of Scripture concerning it. Thus St. Paul: "The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen through faith, preached the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." *Gal.* iii. 8. It is in this sense, termed "the *mystery* which was hidden in God;" "the *secret purpose* which was purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," &c.; from all which, it is certain, that the existence of the Gospel, as a system of Divine Mercy and Redemption, is distinct from its knowledge as an outward Revelation, and as a subject of human belief. Now, it is upon this distinction, as it regards the Heathen, that our entire argument is built respecting their interest in Christ, as the Saviour and the Redeemer of the world. For, as we believe, that the Patriarchs and Jews of old possessed this interest, though they knew little or nothing of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity; so also, is it our purpose to shew, that the

same interest does still extend over the Pagan nations, though they have never heard the name of their Redeemer.

But, let me again repeat, that it is my object to bring our religion into contact with the whole history of mankind; not to represent it as if any "could be saved by the law or sect which he professeth *." Still less could I countenance that indefinite liberality which derides as matter of indifference what we believe or what we deny—

> "For modes of faith, let senseless bigots fight,
> His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right."

If this view of Christianity be correct, it has indeed provided every man, whether Christian or Heathen, with the means of salvation. "To some it has given more, to others less—to every man according to his ability." But, as it has made every one strictly responsible for what he actually possesses, so far from the knowledge of it being a matter of indifference, it is to those

* Article xviii.

who enjoy it, the very test and criterion of their trial.—If the light which is in them be darkness, how great is that darkness!

Nor has our enquiry respecting the salvability of the Heathen any connection with the dreams of Universal Restoration. When all men shall stand around the judgment seat of Christ, the Heathen, as well as others, will receive their allotted portions of punishment or reward. This we learn from our Saviour's declaration: "In the day of judgment, it shall be more tolerable for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah." But there is no authority for supposing their dooms will not be final. Whether this argument be thought true or false, it has no tendency to unsettle any one article of orthodox Christianity; but on the contrary, it lends force and beauty to every doctrine which has been received as such by the Christian Church.

That the Scriptural evidence for the salvability of the Heathen might be seen in all its amplitude and extent, I have arranged my argument under the form of short sections; each of which is founded

on some clear passage in the Old or New Testament. For this purpose, I have followed the History of the Bible, from the creation of man, through the Patriarchal and the Mosaic economy, to the life of Christ, and to the age of the Apostles. When the number and variety of these sections, are considered, combining at once the value of incidental allusion, and the force of direct argument; I hope, it will not be thought that I have laboured in vain. This track, I am aware, has been but little frequented, so little, that I have sought in vain for any professed work of this kind in the English language.

> Avia Pieridum peragro loca, nullius ante
> Trita solo; juvat integros accedere fontes
> Atque haurire.

But I have diligently sought for such incidental confirmations of my argument, as I could meet with in writers of eminence: and of these a copious list will be found in the Appendix. Still I would beg my reader to try the doctrine solely by the force of Scriptural evidence. I am satisfied, that

it will be found amply sufficient to support our conclusions, and it is a mine which I do not pretend to have exhausted, though I have diligently laboured at it. Let us then lay aside all the partiality of preconceived opinions; it is to the word and testimony that we appeal, and by that word and testimony we are content to stand or fall.

As to the opinions which have been entertained on this subject, they may be arranged under three classes. *First*, it has been positively affirmed by some, such as Barrow, Tillotson, &c.: *Secondly*, it has been positively denied by others, such as Beveridge, and the Calvinistic writers: and *Thirdly*, it has been neither affirmed nor denied, but either *hoped* or *doubted*, by a still greater number. I need scarcely say, that it is to this intermediate class, this work is peculiarly addressed.

THE

NATURE AND EXTENT

OF THE

CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION.

PART THE FIRST.

THE CREATION TO THE FLOOD.

SECTION I.

The Creation.—B. C. 4000.

THE History of the Bible commences with an account of the creation of the world; and it informs us, that from a single pair of human beings, the whole human race has descended. "He hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth."

From the whole of Scripture, it also

appears, that Adam was treated and considered as the federal head and representative of all his posterity, and that according to his behaviour, he would entail happiness or misery on his descendants.

If Adam, then, had continued in innocence, there is every reason to conclude, that neither Sin or Death would have entered into the world; because he was dealt with by his Maker, as the Father of Mankind. For though, as Bishop Butler justly remarks, "the very enquiry what would have followed, if God had not done, as he has done, may have in it some very great impropriety, and ought not to be carried on any further, than is necessary to help our partial and inadequate conception of things;" (Analogy, part II. ch. 5.) yet, for the sake of trying the force of an argument, we may be allowed to make this natural supposition.

If, then, all men would have lived by Adam's Innocence, (and this, be it remembered, is something more than an hypothesis, since all men have suffered by Adam's guilt,) we conclude, by plain and necessary

inference, that all men have been treated on the same universal principles, and that "there is no respect of persons with God."

This argument acquires peculiar force from its connection with the first creation of man, because the first creation has a reference to all that follows. It is like laying the first stone of a building. The whole superstructure must depend on its solidity. The more deeply any man ponders the fact, that the whole family of mankind have descended from the same parents, the more fully will he be persuaded, that all the members of this family have been treated by God with the same impartial equity and justice. See *Connection of Natural and Revealed Theology. Part I. Sect. 7.*

SECTION II.

The Fall.

THE reasoning, in the foregoing chapter, is amply confirmed by the event which took place soon after the Creation, and whilst only a single pair of human beings existed. Our first parents fell into sin, and thereby brought on themselves and their posterity the penalties of disobedience. In consequence, they were driven out of Paradise, compelled to earn their bread with the sweat of their brow, rendered liable to sickness and sorrows, and doomed, after a short interval, to return again to their dust. *Gen.* iii. 15—24.

These are effects which have extended to all mankind, they are penalties which are suffered alike by all the nations of the earth. Here, then, "there is no respect of persons," no mark of favouritism or partiality, and the cause which the Scripture assigns is adequate to the effect: "In

Adam all die." "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

But if all men are thus treated as sinners on account of Adam's fall, surely, a strong inference arises, that, whatever might be the future treatment or experience of man, it would extend to all the posterity of Adam; and that, if any plan of grace and mercy were designed for our recovery, it would be co-extensive with the wants of the whole human race, and not confined to any exclusive portion.

Unless the force of this reasoning be admitted, a heavy and, I think, an insuperable difficulty will always attend on the history of the Fall. That some should be punished for Adam's transgression, and that others should not be punished, may suit the principles of Calvinism; but the moment it is admitted, there is an end to the doctrine of Universal Redemption*.

* Bishop Sherlock carries this argument even still further:—"God would not have suffered the world to have been filled with weak and miserable creatures, had he not intended them for objects of mercy." See his Appendix to the Dissertation on the Fall at the end

This inference is also confirmed by facts. The effects of the Fall, both natural and moral, undoubtedly extend to all nations; yet there is likewise the same capability of repentance to be discovered in all. Even Greenlanders and Hottentots may be brought to the knowledge of Christ. But if there be this capability in all men for receiving the remedy, then, it is a plain intimation, that the remedy was designed for all; nor can any man avoid this conclusion, but by resorting to the doctrine of eternal and irrespective decrees.

of his Discourses on Prophecy, p. 287. Consult *Annotations of Natural and Revealed Theology*, Part I. Sect. 9—12.

SECTION III.

The Promise.

As punishment had been inflicted on the first pair of human beings in their federal character, as the common progenitors of mankind; so was the hope and promise of its mitigation and pardon conferred upon them in the same capacity. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." *Gen.* iii. 15.*

Now, it should be distinctly remembered, that this promise was given at a period, not only when Adam had no children born,

* If we consider the first Prophecy as the foundation of their hopes, in which all the sons of Adam have an interest; in which the ages yet to come, as well as the present and those already past, are concerned, we shall not wonder to find that the administrations of Providence have in all ages relation to this Prophecy, and shall have, till the end of all things brings with it the appointed time of the full accomplishment.—*Sherlock on Prophecy*, p. 77.

but *before any had been begotten by him.* Hence, Cain and all men have come into the world, not in the state of Adam immediately after the Fall, but in the state that he was *after he had received the promise.* Hence, we infer, that none are born in a state of damnation, but that all are born under the protection of the promise; *i. e.* in a *salvable* condition, and under the covenant of Grace.

This inference is amply confirmed by the general declaration of Scripture, as will be shown in the progress of our enquiries. For the present, it is sufficient to remember a single passage—"As in Adam *all* die, even so in Christ shall *all* be made alive."

SECTION IV.

Cain and Abel.

THAT our first parents had cheerful hopes of their progeny, is confirmed by the exclamation of Eve on the birth of Cain, her first-born child:—"I have gotten a man from the Lord." *Gen.* iv. 1.—words, which however dubious, in their critical meaning, must be interpreted so as to denote the cheerful expectations of Eve.

That such expectations were not realized, makes nothing against our argument. We do not undertake to prove the actual, but the possible salvation of all men. Now, that Cain was not rendered naturally incapable of partaking the promised blessing, is evident from the Divine Remonstrance:—"If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" *Gen.* iv. 7.

Cain and Abel were like any other two children of the same family, one of whom shall turn out well, and the other ill; one

of whom shall, from his youth, discover wicked, revengeful, malicious propensities, whilst the other is amiable and benevolent. Is there any thing surprising in this contrast; any thing which obliges us to resort to the solution of a Divine decree? It seems to be the natural consequence of a state of free agency, in which there are contrary and conflicting desires of good and evil—"the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit lusting against the flesh."

"Cain was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's were righteous." 1 *John* iii. 12. This is a plain and intelligible account. But it gives no sanction to the doctrine of an eternal and irrespective decree concerning him.

Still further to confirm this reasoning, it should be remembered, that Cain, evil as he was, had ample time granted for repentance; and that, when remorse had driven him to despair, and his atrocity had exposed his life "to any one who might

find him;" that a severe denunciation was issued against all who should attempt to slay him. It is unnecessary for us to enquire into the cause of this indulgence; but it is very important to remember it, as it relates to our general argument. Whether Cain availed himself or not of this mercy, does not affect our conclusion. It is enough that it was offered to him, and as a mark of divine compassion towards the first great moral criminal, it ought to have no small influence on our minds. If it was the suspension of a punishment, because it was the first offence of the kind; then it betokens that very tenderness and forbearance, on which so great a part of our reasoning must depend, as relating to the acceptance of the more virtuous Heathens.

With respect to the sacrificial offerings of Cain and Abel, the main difference as to their acceptance with God, must have arisen from the very opposite tempers and intentions of the respective worshippers. *By faith* Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, but the superiority of his "faith" was connected with

the righteousness of his works, i. e. with his superior virtue, and moral excellence. His faith, indeed, could only at the best, have been a very imperfect glimpse of what we now mean by faith in Christ; but it was accepted because it was sincere, and was supported by the integrity of his life.

Hence, I think, it may be inferred, that even the prayers and sacrifices of the Heathens, when offered up with such feelings of penitence and trust in God as their situations admit, will not be rejected, because they have no *professed* reference to a Redeemer of whom they have never heard. It is no doubt in virtue of the one sacrifice on the cross, that all such prayers and offerings can be acceptable; but, when we reflect, how dim and partial must have been the knowledge of those "who received not the promises, but who beheld them afar off;" I can see no difficulty in believing, that many prayers and offerings of Pagan nations have also been accepted for the sake of "the Lamb who was slain from before the foundation of the world."

There are two instances of Gentile sacrifice recorded in Scripture, which were certainly accepted,—the one is that of Jethro, (see Sect. 20.) the other, that of the mariners who took up Jonah, (see Sect. 43.) "Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord." ch. i. 16.

SECTION V.

Enoch.

By far the most remarkable event which is recorded of the antediluvian world is the translation of Enoch, who "walked with God, and was translated that he should not see death, for he had this testimony, that he pleased God." *Heb.* xi. 5.

That Enoch's faith could correspond only to the times and circumstances in which he lived, is a self-evident proposition. It was the faith of a patriarch, not of a Christian. He lived and acted like one who believed "that God is, and that he is the rewarder of them who diligently seek him." *Heb.* xi. 6.

But, if this is to be taken as the summary of Enoch's faith and piety, and if he was so strikingly rewarded for acting up to that primitive, but partial light which he enjoyed; does it not show, "that every man is accepted according to the ability which God hath given him;"

and if so, will it not tend to demonstrate our argument, that even a poor Heathen, acting upon the dictates of his conscience, will be received and pardoned in virtue of "that propitiation which has been made for the sins of the whole world?"

SECTION VI.

The Flood.

When men had multiplied, and had begun to spread over the earth, they became extremely vicious, so that all flesh was corrupt, and the earth was filled with violence.

This extreme and universal wickedness of the antediluvian world is most satisfactorily accounted for from the great length of their lives, and from the vast strength of their bodily constitutions. Men became giants in crime, as well as in stature, when they could look forward to centuries of indulgence, and when the fears of another life were placed at such an immense distance.

But, to whatever height their wickedness arose, there is not the smallest authority in Scripture for imputing it to any other source, than their own wilful misconduct. Every rational, and probably many extraordinary methods had been used for

their reformation as we may gather from that expression.—"My spirit shall not *always strive* with man." *Gen.* vi. 3.

And strong as the Scriptural expressions are respecting their general wickedness, I know not whether we are authorized in concluding, that *all* men without exception, were equally depraved. If so, it should be remembered, that the descendants of Seth must have very suddenly changed their moral characters. Is it probable, for instance, that the children of Enoch derived *no* benefit from the piety of their parent?

Certain it is, such was the reigning corruption, that it was for the good of all such a state of things should be made to terminate. But, we must not construe general expressions too strictly; still less are we to conclude, that all who perished in the Flood, perished eternally, for this would include infants, and children; a monstrous and incredible supposition, and one, if admitted, which would let in Calvinism with all its horrors.

It is clear from Scripture, that the ante-

diluvians had ample means afforded for repentance. They must have been well acquainted with the history of the Creation and the Fall; they had witnessed the translation of Enoch, Noah had been a preacher of righteousness amongst them for several hundred years,—if then they neglected such monitions, it does not affect the argument for their salvability, but it merely shews, they were obstinately bent on their own destruction. To confirm this reasoning, we need only call to mind the single expression, "It *repented* the Lord, and it *grieved* him at his heart." This expression clearly intimates, that "God hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that he should be converted and live."

Summary of the Argument.

It has been the tendency of the preceding observations to shew that the treatment of the antediluvian world, so far as we can judge of it from Scripture, was conducted on the principles of impartial justice, that none were excluded from the mercy of God but by a wilful and obstinate perseverance in known and unrepented sin, and that consequently every inference which can be deduced from this history, is in favour of our general argument for the salvability of all nations.

But, as it is not to be disguised that our information respecting the antediluvian race is very scanty, so it is important to remember, that it stands distinct from any necessary connection with the subsequent history of mankind. After the Flood, the human race may be said to have started anew, and such a wide and important alteration arose from the contraction of human life, that it may, perhaps, be better

to commence our argument from the latter period.

Should any one, then, be dissatisfied with the effect of the foregoing reasoning as it relates to our general subject, let him here pause, and recommence his enquiries, as if Noah stood in the place of Adam, and as if the history of man had begun from this second era.

Note. On the subject of the antediluvian period, see *Harris on the Messias*, Serm. 1, 2. *Bishop Conybeare's Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 191—241. *Bishop Newton's Dissertation on the Creation*, &c. p. 159—163. *Shuckford*, vol. i. book 1.; and *Bishop Sherlock's Second Dissertation, with the Appendix, in his Discourses on Prophecy.*

PART THE SECOND.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

SECTION VII.

WHATEVER may be the diversity of opinions respecting those who lived before the Flood, or who were swept away by it, there is scarcely any room to doubt that it was a signal act of mercy to all succeeding generations, inasmuch as it has shortened human life, and thereby enforced every motive for penitence and piety, and in the same proportion, diminished our temptations and incentives to evil.

When the life of man was protracted through several hunded years, his hopes of reward and fears of punishment were very faint and distant, his terrestrial pursuits and enjoyments grew up amidst centuries of indulgence, the strength of his constitution and the violence of his passions overcame all the dictates of reason and

conscience. Hence, "the wickedness of man was great upon the earth, and the imaginations of his heart were only evil continually." It was to rectify this scene of crime and atrocity, that God thought fit to sweep away the old world, and thus, by contracting the bounds of this probationary existence, to bring us, as it were, into contact with the rewards and punishments of a future life.

On this account, it should be considered that the argument will now assume a far more plain and practical form, because it will become strictly applicable to ourselves and to those who resemble us in every part of the world. By the universality of the Flood, all men were transformed into one common character, they were reduced to the same level and to the same origin. As far as we are concerned, this was a new creation of the world, and it is from this second creation, we undertake to shew that the promise of God in Christ relates alike to all generations, and that all are rendered salvable through the divine mercy.

SECTION VIII.

The Covenant with Noah.

" God spake unto Noah, and his sons with him, saying, And I, behold I, establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you." *Gen.* ix. 8, 9. " By faith, Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house, by the which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness by faith." *Heb.* xi. 7.

The covenant which is here spoken of, it is admitted, related solely to a temporal promise; *viz.* that there should be no more such a flood upon the earth. But, when it is recollected, that it was made with Noah on *behalf of all flesh*, it must at least prove that Noah was now dealt with, like Adam before, as the federal head and representative of all his posterity. But, if so, it deserves consideration, whether when he " became heir of the righteousness by faith," this inheritance did not extend as matter of

title to *all* his descendants ; in other words, whether the dispensation of grace was not the promised inheritance of all succeeding generations ?

The least which can be inferred from the terms of the covenant, is this, that the providential love and mercy of God should be extended to all his posterity; but, when we consider that the distinction between Providence and Grace is a distinction of artifical theology, rather than implying any difference in the Divine mind, we ought to pause, before we attempt to disunite the one from the other.

It is clearly to be understood also from the expression of St. Paul (*Heb.* xi. 7.), that Noah acted in confidence of that promise which had been previously given to Adam of a Redeemer; and if so, the temporal covenant was but a seal to the spiritual blessing, and they are both to be referred to all mankind. This reasoning is still further confirmed by the consideration, that the terms of the original blessing (see *Gen.* i. 28.) were now repeated to Noah and his sons. " Be fruit-

ful and multiply, and replenish the earth," &c. *Gen.* ix. 1. And to show that the image of God had not *altogether* perished in man through the Fall, the crime of murder is prohibited on this very account. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made he man," ver. 6.

As these declarations were made "to Noah and his sons, *of whom the whole earth was overspread,*" we are obliged to interpret them in reference to *all* mankind. And, as it took place at a period when the whole human race consisted of one single family, and when the world was starting, as it were, from a new creation, it seems necessary to comprehend all future generations under this general covenant. This covenant was the covenant of mercy and of grace through Jesus Christ, being founded on the original promise, "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head."

"Noah had not only the temporal covenant given to him and his sons, but he was also, as the Apostle to the Hebrews tells us, 'heir of the righteousness which is by

faith.' *Ch.* xi. 7. If this be the case, then Noah's blessing is like unto Lamech's prophecy; for as Lamech foresaw that Noah should receive from God the covenant of the earth's restoration; so Noah foresaw that the greater blessing, still behind, even the covenant which restores man to himself and his Maker, should be conveyed through the posterity of Shem." *Sherlock on Prophecy*, p. 104.

SECTION IX.

Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

THESE were the three sons of Noah, "of whom the whole earth was overspread," and to whom the covenant was given in common with their father. *Gen.* ix. 8. Of these, Ham, together with his son Canaan, behaved very undutifully to his father, and thereby brought on this part of his descendants a remarkable curse, which was fulfilled when the Israelites took possession of their country.

That this curse had no relation to the salvability of the Canaanites is apparent from the terms in which it is expressed. "A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren." It predicted the course of their future history, that, amidst the various revolutions of nations, it would be the lot of the Canaanites to be the slaves and subjects of others. But, that the Canaanites, as individuals, were treated like the rest of mankind, with respect to

their moral and religious interests, is certain from what we learn of several individuals amongst them. Thus Rahab is numbered amongst those "who obtained a good report through faith." *Heb.* xi. 31. And we have the example of a Canaanitish woman, who is recorded to have discovered such a degree of faith in Christ as was not to be paralleled even in Israel.

When the Canaanites fell into gross idolatry and wickedness, they brought on themselves the signal chastisement of Heaven. "It was for the wickedness of this nation they were driven out." *Deut.* ix. 4. But with what tenderness and long suffering they had been previously treated, may be gathered from the expression,—"the iniquity of the Amorites is not *yet* full." *Gen.* xv. 16.

These remarks are connected with our argument only as they tend to show, that whatever be the outward judgments of God upon sinful nations, they do not exclude individuals from the capability of salvation; and that, though the *conveyance* of the promise was confined to the family of Shem,

yet, that the two other sons of Noah (of whom, collectively, "the whole earth was overspread") were equally interested in the *effects* of the promise. The lineal descent *could* only be conferred on one family; but the consequences of the blessing were bestowed "upon all the families of the earth."

Corollary. Hence it follows, that Adam and Noah were treated not as individuals, but as the trustees and representatives of all their descendants.

SECTION X.

The Confusion of Language.

For some time after the Flood, "the whole earth was of one language and of one speech," and all mankind dwelt together, as one vast family, in the plains of Shinar. *Gen.* xi. 1, 2.

If, then, it had been the wish and design of Providence that all men should have kept up this intimate connexion with each other, and thereby have preserved a general uniformity in their opinions on moral and religious subjects, nothing would have tended more to ensure this result, than thus leaving them to converse with each other in one original and universal language.

But, so far was this from being the wish or design of God, that, when they had multiplied so as to form separate tribes and nations, a supernatural effect was produced, so that they might no longer "be

one people, nor all have the same language." v. 6.

I do not stop to make any curious enquiries as to the object for which they had met to build the tower of Babel. Whatever it might be, it was evidently made use of as the occasion for their dispersion. Nor is it necessary for us to determine, whether all, or only the majority of the human race were engaged in this mighty attempt. I wish to avoid every thing which is merely curious and critical, and to keep to the plain facts of the history. "The Lord said, Behold the people is one, and they have all one language. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand each other's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of the whole earth." *Gen.* xi. 5—7.

Hence, it is plain, that the diversity of manners and opinions which characterizes the different nations of the world has resulted, in a great measure, from an immediate exercise of Divine power. For it can require no deep research into the

history of mankind to know, that, from a difference of language, a difference of opinions will naturally arise, and that when nations are separated from each other by seas and mountains, they will necessarily fall into very different modes of thinking on moral and religious subjects.

"He hath made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth, and hath determined the times appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." *Acts* xvii. 26. Moses having given an account of the sons of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, concludes:—"These are their sons after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, and after their nations, and by these were the nations of the earth divided after the flood." *Gen.* x. 32. And with an express reference to this event, he speaks of the time "when the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance." *Deut.* xxxii. 8.

It was, therefore, not only by the permission, but by the immediate power of God, that mankind were thus scattered far and wide upon the face of the earth;

that the sons of Japheth went northward to the isles of the Gentiles and peopled Europe; that Shem peopled Asia and the east; and that Ham was the father of Africa. But if this arose from the will and council of the Most High, and if these were the dispensations of his Providence, are we not to infer, that the dispensations of his grace have been accommodated to the same variety of tongues, and kindreds, and nations?

As this is a very important step in our argument, I trust we may be allowed to consider it with that attention which it deserves. How is it that it is generally treated? It is thus: A revelation, it is said, had been originally given to all, and that, if men, as they migrated to a distance from Shinar, forgot this revelation, it was their own fault, and they must abide the consequences. And these are the arguments by which grave divines have attempted to answer the objections of unbelievers!

But, surely, this is not only insulting reason, it is misrepresenting the whole

record of Scripture. So far as we can depend on the account of Moses, it was plainly the design and intention of God, that mankind should *not* retain this uniformity of manners and sentiments; but, that by breaking them into separate communities, and by dispersing them over different countries and climates, they should be made to differ from each other by an indefinite diversity of customs and opinions.

If there had been any wish, on the part of God, that all men should have retained the same worship and the same creed, then, he would have kept them united in one family, and they could have all conversed together in one language. If he had wished them all to retain the same traditionary knowledge, then, this dispersion had not taken place. But, to suppose that he first gave them a revelation, and then scattered them abroad, so that they naturally forgot it, and afterwards punished them for their ignorance of this revelation; these are such glaring absurdities, that one is almost ashamed to recount them.

The Scripture evidently records the dispersion of mankind, as the immediate act of God for the purpose of scattering the nations on the face of the earth; and from this act, the endless diversities of national manners and customs have originated. Some of these tribes went into cold, barren, and inhospitable regions; hence arises savage barbarism. Others, in time, formed mighty empires; hence the wars and stratagems of more civilised society. But, whatever might be these diversities, they were plainly designed by Providence for the exertion and formation of the human character under every possible variety of circumstance and condition.

Such are the elements of a state of trial and probation. "There is no situation in which a rational being is placed, from that of the best instructed Christian, down to that of the rudest barbarian, which affords not room for moral agency, for the acquisition, exercise, and display of voluntary qualities to the good and bad. This observation applies to every condition; to the whole range of the scale; not excepting

even its lowest extremity. Savages appear to us all alike; but it is owing to the distance at which we view savage life, that we perceive in it no discrimination of character. I make no doubt, but that moral qualities both good and bad are called into action as much, and that they subsist in as great a variety in these inartificial societies, as they are, or do, in polished life." *Paley's Natural Theology*, p. 529.

If we connect this sage observation with the original dispersion of mankind, and with the known consequences which have arisen therefrom, we shall perceive how little the designs and intentions of God have been attended to by many who have affected to follow the history of the Bible. To what are we to trace the origin of Pagan barbarism? Surely to this very event, which is here spoken of in Scripture as the immediate act of God. Had there been any wish or design that all men should have partaken of the knowledge of the revelation, then, this dispersion had never been brought about.

What, then, is the result of our inquiries? It is this: that as Providence has not merely permitted, but, in some measure, caused this diversity in the manners, opinions, and circumstances of mankind, it is to be taken as an intimation, that this variety forms the ground-work of our moral treatment, and that it is altogether absurd to suppose any individual will be punished for being that which his Maker formed and intended him to be. The savage, whose ancestors had found their way to Nova Zembla, might just as reasonably be punished for not knowing the use of letters, as for not believing in a Saviour of whom he has never heard. But that savage is still answerable to his Maker for his knowledge of good and evil; and when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, he will stand before the judgment-seat of Christ to receive for the things done in his body, whether they be good or evil. "He hath determined the bounds of their habitation." *Acts* xvii. 26.

SECTION XI.

The Call of Abraham.

It was not till about three hundred years after the dispersion at Babel, that its natural effects began to be felt by the growth of error and idolatry in the east. Whilst then, it was the general plan of Providence "to suffer *all* nations to go on in their own ways," (*Acts* xiv. 16.) it pleased God to select Abraham as the *trustee and depository* of that promise which had been given before to Adam and Noah, on behalf of all mankind.

Yet, as the Bible was designed, not for a general history of the world, but for a record of the promise, it now chiefly confines its notice to that single family from whom the Redeemer should afterwards descend. The affairs of other nations are mentioned only incidentally, and as they happen to come in contact with this peculiar family. But, we are not to infer from this silence, that those nations were for-

gotten or neglected. They were fulfilling their several destinies, as allotted by Providence; the call of Abraham was given on their account; and the subsequent series of God's dealings with the Jews had reference to the welfare and salvation of the Gentiles "of whom the whole earth was overspread."

"To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not unto seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed which is Christ." *Gal.* iii. 16. It was not, then, to the Jewish nation, but to Abraham's seed, i. e. to Christ, as the Saviour of the world the promise was given. And it was given to Abraham whilst he was yet uncircumcised, that is, before he was taken into the Jewish covenant; whilst he was a Gentile, like one of those "of whom the whole earth was overspread."

"And this, I say, that the covenant which was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of no effect."

Gal. iii. 17. But unless we compute this interval from the *first* call of Abraham, whilst he was in Ur of the Chaldees, we cannot make out this number of years. Abraham, therefore, was called in his *Gentile* condition, and before he was taken into any national connexion with God, and he was called in this state, to show that *all* the nations of the earth were alike interested in the promised blessing.

"In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." *Gen.* xii. 3. Consider the time and circumstances at which the promise was made; consider Abraham as dwelling in the midst of Gentile nations, and say, whether it must not be so interpreted as to comprehend *all* the Gentiles both before and after the birth of Christ. "The families of the earth" here alluded to, are plainly the same as those which the historian had just before enumerated. "These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations, and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood." *Gen.* xi. 32.

The call of Abraham was, in a great measure, rendered necessary on account of the miraculous dispersion at Babel; and if so, it must have reference to all, "because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth, and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth." *Gen.* xi. 9.

Note. Upon the call of Abraham, see *Bishop Sherlock's fifth Discourse on Prophecy; Bishop Newton's Posthumous Works*, vol. ii. Dissertat. ix. x.; *Shuckford*, vol. i. book v. "The call of Abraham, and the law of Moses consequent to it, were not intended as general calls to mankind, but were subservient to some other view and design of Providence, viz. *the general restoration of mankind from the curse of the Fall.*" See *Sherlock*, p. 108, 109.

SECTION XII.

The Covenant renewed.

The first and original promise was given to Abraham *as a Gentile*, whilst he was yet uncircumcised, and on behalf of all the families of the earth. But, to carry this universal promise into effect, he was afterwards taken into a peculiar and privileged connexion with God, as the *father of the Jewish nation*. To this end, he received the seal of circumcision, and was promised the land of Canaan, as the allotted inheritance of his posterity.

Now, that this temporal and national covenant was made with Abraham as the channel and instrument of the original blessing, is plain, both from the Scripture narration, and from St. Paul's reasoning concerning it. "That Abraham should become a great and mighty nation" was secondary and subservient to the promise "that in him all the nations of the earth should be

blessed." *Gen.* xviii. 18. The more limited and local covenant was so far from interfering with the previous and universal promise, that it was necessary to its fulfilment and completion. But it was given only "till the seed should come to whom the promise had been made." *Gal.* iii. 19. It was only the casket for the preservation of the jewel. By remembering clearly this distinction, our argument will proceed without embarrassment or confusion.

"The great article of the covenant most evidently regarded the whole race of man, and was to grow, in fulness of time, into a blessing upon all the nations of the earth. He and his posterity were the depositories of these hopes; or, to use the words of St. Paul, this was the *Jews'* chief advantage above others, 'That unto them were committed the oracles of God.'" *Bishop Sherlock on Prophecy*, p. 126.

SECTION XIII.

Sodom and Gomorrah.

THE destruction of the cities of the plain was an awful manifestation of the divine justice against enormous sins, but it forms no argument against the natural salvability of their wretched inhabitants. "*Because* the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah is very great, and *because* their sin is very grievous, I will go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it which is come unto me." *Gen.* xviii. 20.

These words clearly imply the following particulars: First, that the inhabitants of these cities were far greater sinners than those around. Secondly, that they were punished for the excess and enormity of their wickedness, and not for the common frailties of human nature.

Abraham probably was not fully aware of the pitch of their depravity, he thought there might be some good individuals

living amongst them. He implores God, that if there were any righteous, the city might be spared on their account. The divine answer is very affecting, that "if there were only ten righteous in the city, God would not destroy it for their sake." ver. 32.

The natural impression arising from this whole narrative is this, that all men are not regarded by God as such incorrigible sinners as to demand their necessary destruction, that Heathen nations have probably some individuals amongst them who are "righteous" when compared to others, and that on account of these, they are spared; and that "intercession for all men," whether good or bad, Pagans or Christians, is acceptable in the sight of God, whether it be availing or not to their final pardon.

And this impression is confirmed by the declaration of Jesus, "that it shall be more tolerable even for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment," than for those who heard and rejected the tidings of the Gospel; a declaration, which, whilst it assures us

that every degree of merciful allowance will be made for partial ignorance, conveys a clear and decisive confirmation, that our *privileges* are but another name for our *obligations*, and that not a shadow of undue preference will be shown to those who have enjoyed the fairest opportunities of religious improvement. "Therefore judge nothing before the time, till the Lord come, &c., and then shall *every man* have praise of God." 1 *Cor.* iv. 5.

The question which Abraham here asks, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right," and the reply which God returns, form the fullest vindication of our argument respecting the Heathen; as it clearly establishes the correspondence of the Divine attributes with our own conceptions of moral equity.

SECTION XIV.

Abraham and Abimelech.

As Abraham journeyed toward the south, he came into the country of Abimelech, and fearing, lest the beauty of Sarah might expose him to danger, he disguised her as his sister. Abimelech, the prince of the country, on this took Sarah as his intended concubine. But God came to Abimelech, and warned him of his danger. So far was the Gentile chieftain from slighting this monition, that he is represented as pleading with God on the innocence of his motives, and God said unto him, "Yea, I know that thou didst it in the integrity of thy heart," &c. *Gen.* xx. 10.

The apology which Abraham offered is very remarkable, "because I thought surely the fear of God is not in this place." v. 11. He hastily concluded, that all were equally wicked, but the integrity of the Gentile rebuked even the Father of the faithful for his want of charity; leaving us a me-

morable caution, that we also should not pass indiscriminate censures on all who are not of Abraham's seed. See also *Gen.* xxvi. 28, 29.

Amidst the numerous crimes and vices of Heathen nations, there are some green spots, like the oasis in the desert. The continence of Scipio, and the chastity of Alexander are too well known to require a formal relation. In Valerius Maximus are many beautiful examples of Heathen virtue. "The negro women," says Park in his travels in Africa, "are very cheerful and frank; but they are by no means given to intrigue. We hear that instances of conjugal infidelity are not common." Vol. i. p. 407. "One of the first lessons in which the Mandingo women instruct their children is the practice of truth." He then refers to the story of a youth who had been murdered by a Moorish banditti, and the mother's only consolation in her distress was this, "that her boy had never told a lie." Vol. i. p. 402.

SECTION XV.

Ishmael.

"ABRAHAM had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bond woman, was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman, was by promise." *Gal.* iv. 22.

There was here doubtless a marked difference and distinction, and the peculiar blessing was all on the side of Isaac, as being the child by whom the promise should be fulfilled. But the question is, whether there is any thing to be deduced from Scripture against the *salvability* of the offspring of Hagar?

So far is this from being the case, that we must arrive at quite another conclusion. "The angel of the Lord said unto Hagar, Return unto thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands—I will multiply thy seed exceedingly that it shall not be numbered for multitude," *Gen.* xvi. 10.,

and "thou shalt call his name Ishmael (i. e. God shall hear,) because the Lord hath heard thy supplication," v. 11. But this was clearly meant for a consolation and a blessing; and such a passage could never have been recorded in Scripture, if we were authorized to infer, that the numerous posterity of Ishmael had been cut off from the means of salvation.

Nor is this all,—we have the prayers of Abraham on behalf of Hagar's child. "And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee." "As for Ishmael," replies God, "I have heard thee, behold, I have *blessed* him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply his seed exceedingly. Twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation, but my *covenant* will I establish with Isaac." *Gen.* xvii. 20. *Gen.* xxi. 20.

The blessings which are here mentioned, it is granted, are principally of a temporal nature, but such blessings would have been the greatest curses on the horrible supposition, that all his descendants had been excluded from the possibility of obtaining eternal happiness.

As to the character which is given of Ishmael and his posterity, "he shall be a wild man, his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him," &c. ver. 12., whilst it forms a prophetic description of the character and manners of the Turks and Arabians, it determines nothing whatever against their salvability. Such as they are, they will be judged according to their means of knowledge. The inhabitant of the desert will not be condemned for his want of civilization, nor will the child, who has been educated in the errors of Mahometanism, be punished for his want of Christian baptism. It should be remembered that the death of Ishmael is mentioned in Scripture with all the circumstances of that of a pious patriarch. "These are the years of the life of Ishmael, one hundred and thirty seven years, and he gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, he died in the presence of all his brethren." *Gen.* xxv. 17, 18.

SECTION XVI.

Isaac, Jacob, and Esau.

"ISAAC married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, the Syrian of Padan Aram, the sister of Laban the Syrian." *Gen.* xxv. 20. That these individuals retained some knowledge of the true God is plain, from their answer respecting the marriage, "the thing proceedeth from the Lord." *Gen.* xxiv. 50. It is from such incidental circumstances, that we are led to judge favourably of the religious condition of these Gentile nations in those early ages. A still more decisive inference may be drawn from the covenant made between Jacob and Laban, in which "the God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father," is invoked to judge between them. *Gen.* xxxi. 44—53.

Rebekah had twin-born sons, Esau and Jacob, the blessing of the descent was given to the latter, and there is every

reason to think, that it was decided in favour of the more virtuous and pious. But though the preference was shown to Jacob, there is nothing in Scripture which should lead us to suppose that either Esau or his descendants were excluded from the benefits of the promise; but merely, that they were not chosen as *the line* by which it should be accomplished.

The expressions of Malachi, "Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord; yet I loved Jacob, and hated Esau," chap. i. 3. are thus commented on by St. Paul: "When Rebekah had conceived by one, even our father Isaac, (the children being not yet born, neither having done good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.) It was said unto her, "the elder shall serve the younger." *Rom.* ix. 10—12.

Here the distinction is clearly made to depend, not on their election to eternal life, but on the distinction as to the temporal promise relating to the land of Canaan, and to the line of the promised

seed. It is admitted, even by Mr. Scott, "that the apostle in thus adducing the case of Isaac and Ishmael, and of Esau and Jacob, did not decide as to the eternal state of either." See his notes on *Rom.* ix. 6—9. x. 14. But if so, the argument respecting the salvability of Heathen nations remains quite untouched by any of these providential appointments. God is the judge who appointeth the bounds of all our habitations. To the seed of Isaac, he assigns the land of Canaan, he makes Esau the father of the Edomites, the Moabites and Hagarens; but he judges *all* according to the circumstances in which he has placed them, and this again reduces every thing to an impartial distribution. It is thus that "every valley shall be exalted, and every hill shall be made low, the rough ways smooth, and the crooked straight, and that all flesh shall see the salvation of our God."

Nor is there any thing in Scripture, which should make us judge harshly respecting the eternal condition of Esau as an individual. His resentment against Jacob

soon passed away, and when he met him "he ran to meet him and fell on his neck and kissed him." *Gen.* xxxiii. They appear always to have lived on terms of friendship, and they both joined in paying the last duties to their beloved father. "Isaac gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days, and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him." *Gen.* xxxv. 29.

"The promise of Grace," says Bishop Hooper, "appertaineth to every sort of men in the world, and comprehendeth them all, howbeit, within certain limits and bounds, the which, if men neglect or pass over, they exclude themselves from the promise in Christ. Thus Cain was no more excluded, till he excluded himself, than Abel; Saul, than David; Judas, than Peter; Esau, than Jacob."

SECTION XVII.

Joseph and Pharaoh.

In the account of the first Pharaoh's dealings with Joseph, the Egyptian monarch appears to have acted with the strictest honesty and integrity, and as a reward he was supernaturally apprized of the famine which should come upon his land. When he exclaims concerning Joseph, "can we find such a man as this, a man in whom the spirit of the Lord is?" *Gen.* xli. 38, he seems to have been actuated by a spirit of real piety. Hard it would be, indeed, to question the salvability of a monarch who could come to this pious resolution: "forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art; thou shalt be over my house, and according to thy word shall all my people be ruled, only in the throne will I be greater than thou." v. 39.

There are frequent allusions in Scripture

to the tenderness with which God treated the Heathen nations who beheld his judgments on the Israelites. "In the day that he lifted up his hand to bring them forth of the land of Egypt, he commanded them to cast away the idols of the Egyptians, but they did not. Then I said, I would pour out my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the Heathen amongst whom they were." *Ezek.* xx. 5—10. This tenderness towards the Egyptians and other Heathen nations, can be explained only on a desire not to aggravate their sins, and this affords us no slight ground for our general argument. "In whose sight I made myself known unto them (the Heathen), by bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt." ver. 9. "I will be sanctified in you before the Heathen." ver. 41.

SECTION XVIII.

Intermarriages of the Patriarchs with Gentiles.

In support of the argument for the salvability of Heathen nations, it is of importance to recollect the frequent alliances which the patriarchs formed with Gentile families. Isaac and Jacob married, indeed, their cousins; but Joseph married Asenath the daughter of an Egyptian priest, (*Gen.* xli. 45.) by whom he had Ephraim and Manasseh: and so far was this Egyptian alliance from interfering with their privileges, that Jacob when dying adopted them amongst the tribe of Israel. "In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh." *Gen.* xlviii. 20: Moses also, as we shall hereafter observe, married the daughter of Jethro, the priest of Midian. *Exod.* ii. 21. And so far were the patriarchs from shunning an intercourse with the neighbouring nations, that they

seem to have lived on the most friendly terms with them, and to this day, their names are highly venerated in every part of the East.

The inference which hence arises as to the *salvability* of Heathen nations, is too obvious to require any observation.

Note. On the state of religion amongst the eastern nations in the patriarchal age, see *Shuckford*, vol. i. 254—273. His general conclusion is, there was a universal agreement about religion in Abraham's time: "Even the Canaanites gave him no kind of disturbance during all the time he sojourned amongst them; and we have no reason to suppose they differed from him in their religion. When he came into the land of the Philistines, he found Abimelech, a good and virtuous king," &c. p. 278. See also *Bishop Newton's Posthumous Works*, vol. ii. Dissertat. ix. x. *Sherlock on Prophecy*, Discourse iv. v.

SECTION XIX.

Summary of the foregoing Argument.

From the preceding sketch of patriarchal history, it appears, that the original dispersion of mankind after the Flood arose in consequence of an immediate exertion of divine power, and that from this diversity of language, the diversity of manners and customs, of national and religious distinctions necessarily followed. From the dispersion of mankind at Babel, the greater part of our social and national varieties have unquestionably arisen.

It appears, also, that about three hundred years after this event, God was pleased to select Abraham as the trustee of that promise which had been made to Adam on behalf of all his descendants; but that neither Abraham, Isaac or Jacob seem to have drawn any unfavourable conclusions on this account against the rest of mankind. They lived on terms of friendship

and hospitality with their neighbours, many of whom seem to have been eminent for their honesty and integrity, and to have been actuated by the love and fear of God.

In the absence of all contrary evidence, this must be allowed to form no slight testimony in favour of our argument for the salvability of Heathen nations. It cannot be expected, that the Bible should enter into professed or minute declarations respecting those who had not the benefit of the Revelation, and to whom such declarations would be of no advantage; but, if it describes the patriarchs in these early times, as forming marriages and alliances with the neighbouring nations, and as conducting themselves towards all men as their brethren; then, there is no foundation for any harsh decisions concerning the rest of the world. The advantages and privileges enjoyed by Abraham and his family, seem not to have suggested to them any thing unfavourable to others, and these advantages, if our argument be correct, were for the benefit of all, and were ulti-

mately designed for the use of all the families of the earth.

The distinction between the promise to Abraham, "that in him all the families of the earth should be blessed," and the temporal covenant made with him respecting the land of Canaan, is clearly pointed out by Shuckford, who adduces an apocryphal writer to confirm his opinion:—"With Isaac did He establish likewise (for Abraham, his father's sake) the blessing of all men, *and* the covenant." *Eccles.* xliv. 22. vol. ii. p. 214.

PART THE THIRD.

The Jewish Economy.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

We are now arrived at that period of the world, when the promise, which had been originally given to Adam, and which had been subsequently repeated to Noah and Abraham, was henceforth to assume a national and civil form, by being incorporated with the laws and ceremonies of the Jewish people. As in the patriarchal age, the form of the promise assumed that of a domestic blessing conferred on a particular family, so now, when it became national, it was invested with the appearance of a civil and ecclesiastical polity. But the original blessing and promise was still the same amidst all these varieties; and whether primitive, patriarchal, or Jewish, the form of the revelation might vary, yet the substance remained the same. "God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners,

spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath, in these last days, spoken unto us by his Son."

But, however grand and pleasing it is to generalize and to glance "from the beginning to the end," yet, when we confine our attention to a single part, we must be content with that particular evidence which is peculiar to the period. As such, I would now solicit my reader to consider the *kind* of evidence which may be naturally expected from this portion of the Bible history.

First, then, it must be admitted, that, however universal the blessing and promise might be, abstractedly considered, yet, that when it was made to assume a civil and national form, it would, in a great measure, appear, for the time, to be national and exclusive. If the Jews were selected as the guardians and trustees of the promise, then, it is clear, that, though they were selected for the common benefit of all, yet, that they would *appear* like a peculiar and privileged people. Many of their rites and ceremonies would be given for the very

purpose of keeping them thus distinct and separate; and, on many occasions, they would be naturally led to value themselves on those peculiar distinctions by which they were distinguished from the rest of mankind.

But, on the other hand, it must be admitted, that, if the original promise still held good to all, and that if the Jews were nothing more than the channels and instruments for carrying this promise into effect, this object would be kept in view amidst all their national privileges and local advantages.

Keeping these two considerations constantly before us, we shall here find exactly that kind of evidence for our argument which might be expected from the circumstances of a temporary and intermediate national dispensation. To have given a professed and formal recognition of the universality of the covenant as it respected all mankind, would have defeated the very purposes of the Jewish polity; and as such, it cannot be here expected. But, if numerous facts are incidently arising which

clearly point to this conclusion; if the principles of their laws, and the predictions of their prophets alike designate the same final purpose; if their national prosperity and adversity be made altogether subservient to the developement of this plan; then, is every thing contained in our argument which can be reasonably demanded. It connects the peculiar purposes of the Jewish Law with the general purposes of the Universal Promise.

All that I would beg of my reader, is to lay aside the influence of preconceived opinions. Our appeal is "to the word and to the testimony;" not to the systems of artificial theology. "Iliacos intra muros peccatur et extra." Some, whilst admitting in theory the doctrine of universal redemption, have confined its benefits to the members of the Christian church;—others, in their zeal for missionary undertakings, have first admitted the abstract principle, and then have denied its practical application. Some, from the apprehension of infidel indifference; others, from the feelings of ecclesiastical privilege,

have shut the gates of mercy on mankind; but, whatever be the party or prepossessions of my reader, let him now grant his Bible a free and unbiassed hearing.

If this argument be valid, the covenant of God in Christ was not given to Adam, to Noah, or to Abraham, as individuals; it was not given *exclusively* to the members of the Jewish or the Christian church; but it was given to these on behalf of all mankind. As the trusteeship of the promise, before its fulfilment, was confided to patriarchs and to the members of the Jewish church; so now, since its fulfilment, it is confided to Christians. But the promise, in its nature and effects, is still Catholic or universal, and it belongs "to all the families of the earth."

"The Jewish separation," says Warburton, "was made for the sake of the rest of mankind in general, though one people became the honoured instrument, in reward of their forefathers' virtues." *Div. Leg.* book v. sect. i. p. 136.

SECTION XX.

Moses and Jethro.—B. C. 1490.

About two hundred years after Joseph's decease, Moses was born, and as the Egyptians then began to feel jealous and uneasy at the rapid increase of the Israelites, they tried, by every kind of cruelty, to keep down their numbers. Moses had been providentially preserved by Pharaoh's daughter; but, on a dispute arising between an Egyptian and an Israelite, Moses slew the Egyptian aggressor, and made his escape into the land of Midian. There, he formed an alliance with Zipporah, the daughter of Jethro, priest of Midian, a fact which seems to intimate that the patriarchal religion was not yet extinct in those regions.

When the Israelites quitted Egypt, Jethro, for some time, detained his daughter; but, at length, he became convinced, that God had miraculously interposed to rescue Moses and the Israelites

from their Egyptian bondage. Accordingly, he followed them into the wilderness, and brought Zipporah and her two sons with him. Moses received him with the utmost respect. And Jethro said, "Blessed be the Lord God who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians; and now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods. And *Jethro took a burnt-offering and sacrifices for God.* And Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread with Moses's father-in-law." *Exod.* xviii. 1—12. Jethro then gave Moses some advice respecting the administration of justice amongst the people; and afterwards he departed and went his way into his own land. ver. 27.

The inference which hence arises, is clearly in favour of our general argument for the salvability of Gentile nations. Jethro, it is probable, was neither better nor worse than many other Midianitish priests; but, such as he was, he appears to have publicly officiated in his sacerdotal character in the midst of the Israelitish camp.

This fact is important, since it is in direct opposition to those who imagine, that, because the Divine Being was pleased to be called the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in his tutelary relation to the Israelites, he had cast off his care and love for the other nations of the earth.

Here also is an example of a Gentile sacrifice which was acceptable unto God, and which appears to have been offered *after* the institution of the Passover. I do not wish to press this fact beyond what it will naturally bear; but it seems to intimate, that a sacrificial offering would not *always* be rejected because it was not offered up by the tribe of Levi. Though heathen sacrifices had no express and acknowledged reference to the Redeemer, yet, if they served "as a remembrance of sin," and were offered up with penitential feelings; I think, we may infer, they were accepted by Him who "will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed."

With respect to the origin of sacrifice, it is my firm conviction, that it was of

Divine appointment; but, as this controversy is not connected with the argument for the salvability of heathen nations, I shall leave the reader to follow his own opinions concerning it.

In this, and the following sections, we have argued from particulars to universals, and have brought forward individual examples in support of our general conclusion for the salvability of the Gentiles, in all ages of the world. But, it is fair to apprise my reader, that others have adopted quite an opposite method, and have treated these examples only as exceptions to the general rule. "Thus," Bishop Andrews quaintly observes, "A little wicket there was left open, whereat divers Gentiles did come in. Many a '*venit*' there was. *Venit* Job in the patriarch's day; *venit* Jethro in Moses's, Rahab in Joshua's, Ruth in the Judges' time. Ittai (the king of Gath's son) in David's; the queen of Sheba in Solomon's; the widow of Sarepta in Elias's; Naaman, the Syrian, in Elisha's time. Each of these in their times had

the favour to be let in. This was but a *venit,* a little wicket for one or two." *Sermon on the Nativity.* But I appeal from Andrews's learning to Bacon's logic. The only question then is,—*Is our induction sufficiently extensive?*

It should also be distinctly understood, that the method which Bishop Andrews here employs, is no other than the Calvinistic method of *personal* election. If, then, this course be followed with respect to the individuals here mentioned, there can be no valid objection to its exercise under the revelation of Christianity. Hence it appears, that the doctrine of Heathen salvability is indissolubly connected with the doctrine of Universal Redemption, as regards the members of the church.

SECTION XXI.

Jewish Proselytes.

THE Mosaic institutions were, in a great measure, national and exclusive, because they could not otherwise have answered the purpose of keeping the Jews separate and distinct from all other nations. But to show that this principle was carried no further than the necessity of the case required, "the stranger" was allowed when circumcised to join himself to them. "One law shall be to him who is home-born, and unto the stranger which sojourneth among you." *Exod.* xii. 49.

It is impossible to read this liberal regulation, and not to perceive that it altogether destroys the harsh suspicion which would insinuate that the Gentiles were incapable of partaking the Divine mercy. If there had been any thing in God's covenant with Abraham which had confined the blessing to his natural descendants, then, no stranger or proselyte

could have been permitted to join himself to the people of Israel. This law of the stranger, it should be remembered, was coeval with the Jewish economy; it was not an adventitious addition of later times, but it formed part of the original institution of Moses. As such, I apprehend that it places the argument for the salvability of the Heathen on the most solid and substantial ground, because it evinces the natural capacity of all mankind for partaking in those privileges, which, for especial purposes, had been communicated only to the Jews.

"The stranger," it is true, was obliged to be circumcised, ere he could partake of those peculiar advantages which were annexed to the Mosaic economy. So also, when the Heathen are brought to a knowledge of the Gospel, they must submit to baptism, before they can be considered members of the Christian Church. But, the argument still holds good, that there is a natural and inherent capability in *all* mankind for receiving such privileges. If, then, there were nothing which could be

esteemed essentially exclusive, even in the nature of the Mosaic laws, how much stronger does the same argument appear, when applied to the terms of the Christian dispensation. Hence it is, that our definitions of the Christian church accord so little with its geographical extent. "Credimus, unam esse ecclesiam Dei, eamque non, ut olim apud Judæos, in unum aliquem angulum aut regnum conclusam; sed Catholicam atque universalem esse, et diffusam in totum terrarum orbem, ut nulla nunc natio sit quæ possit vere conqueri se exclusam esse," &c. *Juelli Apolog.* p. 25. *Edit. Cant.* 1692.

To perceive the incorrectness of this statement, even at the present time, it is only to remember, that the whole number of Christians is estimated at two hundred and twenty-eight millions; whilst the number of Jews, Mahommetans, and Pagans, forms an aggregate of six hundred and twenty-two millions!

SECTION XXII.

The Moral Law.

THE foregoing argument is still further confirmed by the consideration, that the moral part of the Mosaic economy, (and it might be added also, of the Christian religion) is essentially the same as that which is written on the hearts of all mankind, and that when "the Gentiles who have not the (written) law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves." *Rom.* ii. 14.

But, as neither Jews nor Gentiles can live up to the full requirement of this law, and as all feel and acknowledge that no man living can be justified by fulfilling its demands, may we not deduce the inference that all, whether Jews or Gentiles, are viewed by God as being under the same moral condition? "By the law (whether written or unwritten,) is the knowledge of sin," but "by the works of the law no

flesh can be justified." Hence, whilst the morality of the law forms the rule of life, and whilst it constitutes the test and criterion of our characters, it still leaves all men, whether Jews or Gentiles, alike dependents and supplicants on the divine mercy.

If such then be the universal obligation, yet the universal inability of individuals of all countries and of all ages, may we not infer, that the whole body of mankind are living under the same religious dispensation? What that dispensation is, the Scriptures declare, when they set forth Christ, as "the only name given under heaven whereby we may be saved," and as "the eternal purpose" for which the world was made. The title to salvation being thus provided for all, its terms and conditions must vary with the knowledge and ignorance of individuals, but the title is universally the same. That charter which extends to all is the charter of mercy and grace. Since "all have sinned, and all have come short of the glory of God," whether we be Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, we

must be saved, not in virtue of our righteousness, but in virtue of that divine Redeemer, who, by "his one oblation of himself, once offered, hath made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world."

The common solution of Calvinists, that the moral law is written on our hearts to render all men without excuse, and that hence, the Heathen will be condemned for not living up to that standard, to which the most advanced Christian cannot attain, is so replete with refined injustice and doctrinal barbarity, that it cannot impede the course of our argument.

"There can be nothing," says Barrow, "in the mysteries of predestination and providence, which really subverts an assertion so often clearly expressed, and so well grounded in reason, or in the consideration of God's nature, attributes, ordidinary way of acting, &c. And whatever expressions are repugnant thereto in sound, it yet must stand, that God is impartially merciful, benign, just," &c. vol. ii. p. 310.

SECTION XXIII.

The Ceremonial Law.

If any additional evidence be required to show the national and exclusive nature of the Jewish Ritual, it may be found in the variety and multiplicity of its ceremonial institutions. Whatever appears strange or singular in those ceremonies or sacrifices, may be accounted for, as Spencer has shown at large, from the desire to keep them a separate and peculiar people. But, admirably as such a scheme was adapted for the purposes of the Mosaic economy, it could not possibly have been intended for the general use of mankind. Thus, an institution which demanded a personal appearance three times a year in the Jewish Temple, could not be designed for those who had emigrated to the north of Europe, or to the interior of Africa; but this is a very important consideration, because it clearly shows, that, whilst the Jews were chosen as the trustees for pre-

serving the Scriptures, and for carrying on the purpose of God, yet that Judaism was never intended for a universal religion.

But if the design of the Mosaic Economy were not universal, it acquits all the Heathen who lived before the Christian era of any guilt on that account. As the ceremonial law was a fence to keep the Jews apart from the rest of mankind, so it is plain, that those nations could not be punished for not overleaping the boundaries which Providence had assigned them.

Bishop Warburton has illustrated this argument with his usual sagacity (*Div. Leg.* book v. sect. ii.), and has pointed out a passage of Scripture which connects the national with the universal design of the Jewish Dispensation: "If ye will obey my voice, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a *peculiar treasure* to me above all people: for *all the earth* is mine." *Exod.* xix. 5.

SECTION XXIV.

Sins of Ignorance.

With reference to our general reasoning for the merciful treatment of Heathen nations, it is of importance to remember, there was an express law of atonement prescribed to the Jews for all sins of ignorance. "Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, both for him that is born amongst the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth amongst them." *Numb.* xv. 29.

If there be any inference to be drawn from such a regulation, it leads us to the conclusion, that sins of ignorance are graciously dealt with by God; and that they are always pardoned by Him on account of that propitiation which has been made for the sins of the world. But this is a reflection which carries with it strength and credibility to our whole argument. Dark as the moral situation of the Heathen may be abstractly considered, it should always be

viewed in relation to the mercy of God in Jesus Christ. It is cheering to reflect, that, the beams of the Sun of Righteousness cannot suffer any eclipse from the clouds of error or ignorance, that even the gloom of Paganism, so far as it was involuntary, becomes transparent through mercy; and that ages of ignorance may thus have been permitted to manifest the extent of that divine love which surpasses all understanding. "If ye were blind, ye should have had no sin." *John* ix. 41.

"It is a duty," says Tillotson, "incumbent on all mankind, to believe in the Son of God, where he is sufficiently manifested and revealed to them; but those who never heard of him, nor had any opportunity of coming to the knowledge of him, shall not be condemned for this infidelity, because it is impossible they should *believe on him of whom they have never heard*." *Serm.* lx. vol. 2.

SECTION XXV.

Jewish and Gentile Sacrifices.

The Jews were expressly forbidden to have any intercommunity of worship with other nations, and particularly not to share in their sacrifices. This prohibition was given to preserve them from idolatry, and to "prevent their going after other gods." *Exod.* xxxiv. 15. *Deut.* vii. But the inference which has been hence drawn, that all Gentile sacrifices were alike unacceptable to God, is by no means founded on any Scriptural authority.

Whether sacrifice were of human or divine origin, it has formed an essential part of the religious worship of all nations, and was prevalent long before the Mosaic ritual. If its origin was divine, (as I firmly believe,) then its observance could not be blamed, and even its corruptions admitted of the same apologies as other errors. But if its origin was human, still it is clear, that it was afterwards sanc-

tioned by Divine authority. We have noticed (see Sect. 20.) the sacrifices of Jethro, the priest of Midian; and another instance of a Gentile sacrifice which appears to have been accepted, occurs in *Jonah*, i. 15. "So the men (the sailors,) feared the Lord greatly, and offered sacrifices unto the Lord."

The severity with which all Gentile sacrifices have been condemned, arises from the supposition, that no sacrifice could be acceptable which had not a typical relation to the sacrifice of Christ. But however true this may be, considered abstractedly, yet if this typical knowledge be considered as indispensable to the acceptance of the sacrifice, it would be very difficult in that case to advocate the cause even of the Jewish or Patriarchal oblations.

The truth is, that, whether in sacrifice or in any other act of religious worship, the Scripture always represents the Deity, as accepting the worshipper according to that which he hath the means of performing. Hence the prayers, fastings and repentance of the Ninevites, brought down upon

them the mercy of God, though it is by no means clear, that they gave up all the idolatries and superstitions of their country.

Since "the blood of bulls and goats could never put away sin," their acceptance, whether from Jews or Gentiles, must always have depended as to their positive merit on the atonement of Christ, and as to their relative merit, on the disposition of the worshipper. But, that feelings of penitence may have *sometimes* been mingled with Gentile sacrifices, cannot well be doubted by any one who reads the histories of Pagan nations.

"And now, O man, what doth God require of thee but to love mercy, to do justice, and to walk humbly with thy God." The frequent and strong expressions which we meet with in the Old Testament respecting the inutility even of those sacrifices which had been immediately appointed by God, when not accompanied with the motives of penitence and piety, are calculated to mitigate all harsh decisions respecting the offerings of Gentile worship-

pers. Since it could only be in virtue of the future and unknown Oblation on the cross, that any Levitical sacrifice could have been accepted; since patriarchs and prophets, if they beheld at all, beheld very indistinctly the import of such types and shadows; since infants even now partake of these benefits without any consciousness of their existence, why should we hesitate to admit, that even Heathen sacrifices, when accompanied with prayer and penitence, have been accepted for the sake of "the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world;" and that the incense even of Pagan gratitude and praise may have been received by him "who will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed."

But why should we dwell on merely probable reasoning, when the Arabian Magi came and presented gold and frankincense and myrrh, to the new-born Redeemer of the world?—The sacrifices of Balak and Balaam seem also to afford an indirect attestation of this argument.

SECTION XXVI.

The Jews chosen as Trustees for the Promise.

It has been often urged by unbelievers as an insurmountable objection to the Bible that God should have manifested such a strong partiality towards one people, whilst he was indifferent to the other nations; and this objection, it must be owned, has received too much countenance from the sentiments of many Christian writers. But, upon our principle, there is no foundation whatever for this charge in the records either of the Old or New Testament *.

When the Israelites were about to pass over Jordan to take possession of the land of Canaan, they were expressly informed, that it was not out of any favour to them, or on account of their own merits, that they were distinguished above other nations.

* See this argument developed in Bishop Sherlock's Sixth discourse on Prophecy, and Warburton's *Div. Leg.* Appendix. vol. ii.

Deut. ix. But the reason assigned is, that "God might perform the promise made unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," v. 5. Now, what this promise was, and how it had regard to all the families of the earth has been already shown, and therefore we need not repeat the argument.

The Jews, then, were selected as the guardians and trustees for carrying this promise into effect, and this was the origin and end of the Jewish economy. Whoever wishes to see this subject treated with the authority of an apostle, and with the liberality of a philosopher, should study the epistle to the Hebrews, and that to the Galatians. "To Abraham and his seed were the promises made," &c. and then St. Paul infers, that the covenant which had been made with Abraham four hundred and thirty years before the law was published on Sinai, could not possibly have been annulled or abrogated by that latter and more confirmed revelation.

All this seems perfectly plain and intelligible, yet it is commonly interpreted, as though it related only to those Gentiles

who have lived since the Christian era, and who have been converted to the Christian faith. But the whole form of the argument tends to shew, that the promise to Abraham had been in force ever since it had been given; nay, that it was in force long before his birth. Hence we are told by the same apostle, "that Noah, Seth, Enoch, all died in faith." *Heb.* xi. But if so, the same promise still belongs to all the families of the earth, whether they enjoy its historical knowledge or not.

That the Jews were chosen merely as *trustees* for the promise, is apparent also from this consideration; that their law was of no other use, than as it upheld the promised blessing; and that, even their possession of the land of Canaan, was not in virtue of the Mosaic law, but of the antecedent promise. "If the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise," v. 16. Since then it was not as Jews, but as they formed one of the nations of the earth, that even the Israelites were capable of partaking the promised blessing, we infer that

the same blessing still remains open and available to all mankind of every tongue, and kindred, and people.

But, if the promise, whilst it was yet in abeyance, had an indirect influence upon all nations; surely we may conclude, that since "the seed has come to whom the promise was made," it possesses the same universal relation to all the families of the earth. As the ignorance of the Patriarchs could not prevent the blessing from extending to all sincere penitents though they lived before the Jewish law; so neither can the present ignorance of the Pagan preclude his participation in the same blessing, if he uses the single talent committed to his care according to his ability. "It is evident," says Bishop Sherlock, "that the promise of a blessing to all nations subsisted in its full force, during the continuance of the Law of Moses; for as the Promise was not completed by the giving of the Law, so neither could so general a promise be annulled by a private law given to one people only." p. 148.

SECTION XXVII.

The Law and the Promise.

Much of the obscurity and misapprehension which has arisen on the subject of the Jewish economy would be removed by remembering the clear distinction between their national privileges as *Jews*, and their participation in the promised blessing, as being *one of the nations of the earth*. As the Jewish nation, they had a law given them immediately by God, which was partly moral and partly ceremonial; and the observance of this law was upheld by temporal promises and rewards. So far the argument of Bishop Warburton is solid and correct. Their law was given them as a peculiar people and for the express purpose, to keep them separate and distinct from all other nations; and in these peculiar privileges, no other nation had any participation. Hence the Divine Being bore a tutelary character and national relation

towards them, as "the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and Jacob."

But the Jews did not forego their relation towards God as *men*, because he had taken them into this civil and ecclesiastical connexion; and it was in their universal relation as one of the families of the earth, not as the inhabitants of Canaan, that they could participate in the blessings of the universal promise.

Doubtless there were many important advantages annexed to their national distinction. "What advantage then, hath the Jew, or what profit is there in circumcision? Much every way," replies the apostle; "*but chiefly that unto them were committed the oracles of God.*" *Rom.* iii. 12. This answer could never have been given, if St. Paul had conceived, that all other nations had been treated as outcasts from the mercy of God in Christ. The Jews, he admits, had great privileges in being possessed of a written revelation, and for these privileges they were made responsible. But, it is evident, from this statement, that St. Paul did not conceive that the Jews

were alone salvable, and that all other nations were in a state of hopeless condemnation.

If such be the argument as it refers to the Jewish Church in reference to the Gentile world before the birth of Christ, I would submit, that the case is very similar, as it now relates to the Christian Church, compared with Heathen nations. For the claim of exclusive salvation, we are indebted, I apprehend, to the Church of Rome, as I have yet to learn any Scriptural authority for this exclusive assumption. When I look into the Bible, I find, "that God is no respecter of persons," &c. and that Christ is "the Saviour of the world," &c.; but, when I read the writings of commentators, I frequently find, that the same exclusive claims are now preferred by Christians, which were formerly claimed by the Scribes and Pharisees.

The advantages and privileges of the Christian Church are numerous and valuable; but, as the Jews formerly held the Scriptures as the trustees for all nations; so, I believe that the Christian Church is

now the pillar and depository of the truth, as it relates to all mankind. The sacraments and ordinances of Christ have now been substituted for the rites and sacrifices of the Jewish law; but *the Promise* still holds good unto all the families of the earth. That promise, whether expected or fulfilled, whether well known or unknown, is the common patrimony and inheritance of mankind. The Church is its guardian and trustee, not its monopolist. It was given to Adam from the moment of his fall, nor shall it be denied to the last individual that comes into the world.

Nor is there any thing in this position which should offend the lover of ecclesiastical antiquity. "Veteris ecclesiæ judicium fuit, Christum, pro culpâ universali, hominibus providisse remedio universali, solvendo λυτρον infiniti pretii, ne ejus defectu periret quisquam." *Vossii Hist. Pelag.*

SECTION XXVIII.

The Gibeonites.

The Gibeonites were a part of the Hivites, who formed one of the Canaanitish tribes. Perceiving from the success of Joshua, that the Israelites were aided by God, and would probably become masters of the land; they formed a league with Joshua, and became an auxiliary in his wars. They did not act with perfect good faith; and, consequently, the terms on which they were received were not as favourable as they would otherwise have been. "They were made hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation." *Joshua* ix. 6—27. However, it is evident, they were adopted into the Jewish nation, and, as such, participated in Jewish privileges.

They are here mentioned, only as forming a feature in our general argument for the salvability of Heathen nations. As many harsh and unjustifiable sentiments have been delivered concerning the Ca-

naanites, it is of importance to know, that there was nothing in their national condition which necessarily excluded them from the Divine mercy; and that they stood on the same footing, with regard to their eternal interests, as any of the other nations of the earth. See *Graves's Lectures on the Pentateuch*, vol. ii. p. 22.

Note. I beg leave to refer to this valuable work of Dr. Graves for various indirect confirmations of my argument. Whilst apologising for the nature and effects of the Jewish Law, the author has adduced many of the same facts which are here brought forward on behalf of Heathen salvability. This coincidence is the more valuable, as it was altogether undesigned, and has arisen solely from the unity of Truth, when viewed even under different aspects.

SECTION XXIX.

Ruth.—*B. C.* 1310.

"It may be observed," says Dr. Gray, "that the Holy Spirit by recording the adoption of a Gentile woman into the family from which Christ was to derive his origin, might intend to intimate, the comprehensive design of the Christian dispensation." *Key to the Old Testament*, p. 166.

This remark is judicious; but if our argument be correct, it should be extended into an evidence for the salvability of Heathen nations, whether before or after the coming of Christ. There are no nations which are spoken of with greater severity in Scripture, than the children of Edom, and Moab, and Ammon; and to find that a Rahab and a Ruth obtained mercy, seems to intimate, that these nations were dealt with on the same terms of equity and justice as all others; and that, though they were selected as examples of divine judgments on *sinful nations* in their tem-

poral concerns; yet that, as *individuals*, they were treated in their eternal destinies like the rest of mankind.

Such is the inference we draw in relation to the present argument; but the Calvinist would infer the very opposite. He views them as exceptions only to mark the general severity more strongly; just as he supposes the providential kindness of God towards Pagan nations was designed only to aggravate their guilt. I leave my reader to decide which is the more *probable* opinion.

But to establish this reasoning beyond all possibility of doubt, let the following injunctions be pondered and meditated: "Thou shalt not abhor an *Edomite*, for he is thy brother: thou shalt not abhor an *Egyptian*, because thou wast a stranger in *his* land. The children that are begotten of them shall enter into the congregation of the Lord in their third generation." *Deut.* xxiii. 7, 8.

SECTION XXX.

David and Uriah.—B. C. 1000.

If the argument for the universal condemnation of the Heathen were carried to its full extent, it would be difficult to show that any moral obligations could be due towards them. They would be then in the same relation to us as the fallen angels.

But, it is impossible to read the Scripture account of David and Uriah, and not to perceive that no such forlorn and reprobate condition can exist amongst men. Uriah was a Hittite; but from the expressions which are used concerning him (2 Sam. xi. xii.), it is plain, that he was as much beloved by God even as David himself. Solomon, "the beloved of the Lord," was born of Bathsheba, this Hittite's widow; a pretty strong evidence that the blood of the Hittites was every whit as good as that of the chosen people. It is painful to observe how often commentators and unbelievers unite in drawing the same

perverted conclusions from Scripture. The one describe God as casting off all the nations of the earth, except the Jews; and the other infer that the God of the Jews could not have been the God of all the nations of the earth. *Hoc Ithacus velit.*

And yet this kind of theology may boast of great names to uphold it. "St. Jerome noteth, that God leaveth not the good deeds of the heathen unrewarded; who, though they cannot hope by any laudable worldly action, to attain to that eternal happiness reserved for his servants and saints; yet, such is the *boundless goodness* of God, that he often repayeth them with many worldly gifts and temporal blessings." *Raleigh's History of the World,* chap. 7. part i. book ii. Is it possible this should be called *boundless goodness?*

SECTION XXXI.

Solomon's Prayer for the Stranger.

At the dedication of the temple, when Solomon had implored a blessing on all the Israelites, he proceeds to intercede on behalf of all the proselytes who should there offer up their worship. "Moreover, concerning the stranger which is not of thy people Israel, but is come from a far country for thy great name's sake; if they come and pray in this house, then hear them from the heavens, even from thy dwelling-place; and do according to all the stranger calleth thee for; that *all the people of all the earth* may know thy name, and fear thee as doth thy people Israel," &c. 2 *Chron.* vi. 32.

The reflection which Dr. Jackson makes in this passage is remarkable. "Solomon knew the goodness of God to be so great, that it could not be a whit lessened towards Israel, how far soever it was extended towards other people. Happy had it been

for that nation, if their charity had been like this of their Heavenly Father. But it was their seeking to engross God's promised blessings to mankind, which brought that grievous curse upon them under which they groan to this day. See *Patrick in loc. and Graves on the Pentateuch*, vol. ii. part iii. p. 291. I leave this reflection to be pondered on in all its extent, by those who would *now* confine the blessings of salvation to the members of the *Christian* church.

Note. "From 2 Chron. ii. 17., it appears Solomon found in Israel *strangers* of such a rank of life as were fit to be employed in assisting to build the temple, 153,600. These (as the commentators agree, vide Poli Synops. et Patrick, &c.) were proselytes to the worship of the true God, and the observance of the moral law, though not circumcised." Patrick observes, "These were the reliques of the Amorites, Hittites," &c.—*Graves*, vol. ii. p. 292.

SECTION XXXII.

The Queen of Sheba.

The queen of Sheba, and all the kings of Arabia, brought gold and silver to Solomon; and the expressions of the queen are an evidence, that the knowledge and worship of the true God extended far beyond the limits of Dan and Beersheba:—"Blessed be the Lord thy God, who delighteth in thee to set thee on his throne, because God loved Israel to establish them for ever; therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgment and justice." 2 *Chron.* ix. 1—12.

And now, lest any should surmise that this arose from mere curiosity, and had no connexion with religious motives and religious effects, our Saviour has placed the seal of his authority on this very anecdote: "The queen of the south shall rise up in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it," &c. *Matt.* xii. 42.

When a fact of this kind is thus re-

corded in the Old, and commented upon in the New Testament, it naturally suggests the inference, that many, who have been neither Jews nor Christians, shall find a favourable acceptance at the day of judgment; and that, if there be many "first who shall be last," there also are many who are "last that shall be first." "They shall come from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God."

"It was not a particular fondness of affection, of which no particular ground can be assigned or imagined; but a universal goodness, mercy and pity towards this eminent part of his creation sunk in distress and lamentable wretchedness, which induced God to send his Son for the redemption of mankind." *Barrow*, vol. iii. p. 315.

SECTION XXXIII.

Job.

The author and origin of this book are lost in the remotest antiquity, and nothing can with certainty be decided respecting them. But, considered with relation to our argument, this obscurity has no existence. Whether the character of Job be real or fictitious, there is little or nothing in this book which refers to the Jewish Law; and the whole is evidently built on the principles of the primitive and patriarchal religion. "The work of a man shall God render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways." "His eyes are upon the ways of man, he seeth all his goings;" "for he will not lay upon man more than is right," &c. *Ch.* xxxiv. et passim.

That such a fragment of *Gentile* theology should have been admitted into the canon of Scripture is no slight manifestation of the truth of our general argu-

ment. The book of Job exhibits the Deity, not in his peculiar and tutelary relation to the Jews, as the God of Abraham; but in his general and transcendental character, as the God of all the earth, "in whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind." *Ch.* xii. 10.

"Hence Job did collect, that 'God accepteth not the person of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor, for they are all the work of his hands,' *Ch.* xxxiv. 19. "Hence also did he infer, that he was obliged to deal fairly with his own servants, for that God in judgment would consider their case no less than his. 'Did not He that made me in the womb, make him, and did not One fashion us?'" *Ch.* xxxi. 15. *Barrow on Universal Redemption*, vol. iii. p. 304.

SECTION XXXIV.

The Psalms.

THOUGH many of these hymns have an exclusive relation to David and the Israelites, there are others which refer to all the nations of the earth, and which treat of the moral and providential government of God over all nations. Thus the eighth ("O Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the world," &c.) and nineteenth psalms ("The earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is," &c.) plainly describe the Deity under his general relation to all men, and not under his peculiar relation to the Jews. In other psalms all men are exhorted to love and fear God:—"Let all the earth fear the Lord," &c. *Psal.* xxxiii. "Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him," &c. *Psal.* lxv. "O let the nations rejoice and be glad, for thou shalt judge the people righteously," &c. *Psal.* xcvi. "Say unto the Heathen, the Lord reigneth," &c. *Psal.* xcvii. "The Lord

reigneth, let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof," &c. *Psal.* xcviii. "With righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity. Sing unto the Lord all ye lands," &c. "For the Lord is good, his mercy is everlasting," &c. *Psal.* c. "The Lord is loving unto every man, and his mercy is over all his works. *Psal.* cxlv. "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness," &c. *Psal.* cvii. "O praise the Lord all ye Heathen, praise Him all ye nations," &c. *Psal.* cxvii.

Such passages clearly intimate that David extended the mercies of God over all mankind, and that he was far from excluding the Heathen from the hope of eternal happiness. "Let every thing which hath breath praise the Lord."

SECTION XXXV.

Elijah and the Widow.—B. C. 900.

ZAREPHATH, or Sarepta, was a city in the neighbourhood of Sidon, and thither the prophet Elijah was sent, to escape the persecution of Ahab. It was a country of Pagans and idolaters, but God sent his prophet there when he could no longer be safe amongst the people of Israel.

He came to a poor widow, who "had nothing more than a cake and a handful of meal, with a little oil in a cruse, and who was gathering two sticks, that she might go in and dress it for herself and her son, that they might eat it, and die." 1 *Kings* xvii. 12. A surprising miracle was performed, by which Elijah, the widow, and her son, were sustained on this small pittance of food. After a while, the widow's son grew sick, and died; but, on the earnest prayer and solicitation of Elijah, "his soul came into him again, and he revived," ver. 22.

When it is remembered, that all this

was done in the case of a poor Heathen *, it naturally brings us back to our general conclusion respecting their salvability. Nor can we be blamed for interpreting such passages in favour of our argument, since Jesus has adduced this very anecdote for a similar purpose.—" I tell you of a truth, many widows were in *Israel* in the days of Elias, yet unto none of them was he sent, but to Sarepta, a city of *Sidon*." *Luke* iv. 25, 26.

* She had been brought up in gross darkness and idolatry, in utter ignorance of the Lord God of Israel; or, if she had heard of his name, which is all that seems probable, she had been taught to disbelieve the mighty wonders of his hand, and was still less likely to believe his prophet. It appears, therefore, that she must have been wrought upon by an unmixed principle of *humanity*."—*Sterne's Sermons.* For many instances of similar humanity see *Parke's Travels in Africa.*

SECTION XXXVI.

Naaman, the Syrian.—B. C. 890.

As the captain of the Syrian army, Naaman, was the professed enemy of the Jews, and had taken captive an Israelitish damsel, whom he carried into Syria, to attend upon his wife. Naaman was seized with a leprosy; and the young woman earnestly entreated her mistress to send for Elisha out of Samaria, that he might effect his recovery. Elisha did not think fit to go in person; but sent a messenger with the direction, that Naaman should dip himself in Jordan seven times. After some hesitation, he did so, and was perfectly cured. "Behold now, I know," he exclaimed, "there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel." 2 *Kings* v. 15.

Such was Naaman's confession; but as his office obliged him to accompany his master into the temple of Rimmon, he implores forgiveness when he should be obliged to join in an act of Pagan wor-

ship. The Scripture gives us reason to conclude, that the exigency of his station was received as an apology. "Go in peace."

It is right, also, to be mentioned, that, though Naaman, *the Syrian*, was cleansed of his leprosy, yet, that Gehazi, *the Jew*, for his avarice and falsehood, was afflicted with Naaman's disorder. From these concurrent facts, it is not necessary to make any formal deduction with respect to our argument, especially, as Jesus has placed his own authority on this topic:—"Many lepers were in *Israel* in the time of Eliseus, the prophet; yet none of them was cleansed, but Naaman, *the Syrian*." *Luke* iv. 27.

"In the height of Naaman's prosperity, we find the Holy Scripture has given him a very advantageous character, and recorded his name with such glorious titles, as if God had been pleased with his achievements, and approved his conduct, *even whilst he was a heathen*." *Bishop Hickman's Sermons*, vol. i. p. 299.

SECTION XXXVII.

The Samaritans.

When Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, had carried away the Israelites captive to Babylon, he sent some of the idolatrous inhabitants of Cuthah to dwell in Samaria, who, at first, "feared not the Lord;" and, therefore, lions were sent amongst them. 2 *Kings* xvii. 24. To rid themselves of this calamity, they entreated the king of Assyria to send some teachers from the captive Israelites, who might instruct them "in the religion of the land." Then one of the priests, whom they had carried away, taught them; but they blended their ancient idolatries with the Jewish worship. "So they feared the Lord, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, who sacrificed for them. They feared the Lord, and served their own gods, &c." ver. 33—41.

This mixture of Pagan idolatry with the pure worship of Jehovah was, indeed,

far from being right; and it was, therefore, held up in abhorrence to the Israelites. "Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them," &c. ver. 35. Yet, it is plain, I think, from the above expressions, "they feared the Lord," &c.; and from the removal of their punishment as to the lions, that these Samaritans did what was, *on the whole*, acceptable to God, with relation to their previous circumstances and habits. But, if this inference be correct, it forms a case very much in point with regard to the salvability of the Heathen; because it shows that even the corruptions of idolatry, where they are hereditary and involuntary, are pardoned by Him, who is not "extreme to mark what is done amiss."

The same inference, I apprehend, may also be drawn from the casual expressions of Moses, "He that feared the word of the Lord *among the servants of Pharaoh*," &c. Exod. ix. 20, 21.

SECTION XXXVIII.

Solomon and Hiram.—B. C. 1000.

When Solomon "had determined to build an house unto the Lord;" he sent to Hiram king of Tyre, to assist him both with materials and workmen. In making known his wishes, he did not disguise his intentions. "Behold, I build an house unto the name of the Lord my God," &c. "and the house which I build is great, for our God is above all gods," &c. 2 *Chron.* ii. 3—9. Not only did the king of Tyre accede to his request, but he sent Solomon this remarkable answer: "Because the Lord hath loved his people, he hath made thee king over them. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel that hath made heaven and earth." ver. 11, 12.

It is impossible to read this correspondence, and not to perceive, that the king of Tyre and his people must have had much greater religious knowledge than is commonly supposed; and that this knowledge

had a considerable effect in disposing them thus to assist the Israelitish monarch. The result which this brings to our general argument is the more striking, because the cities of Tyre and Sidon are so frequently mentioned in the ancient prophets as examples of the Divine justice. But, it was probably to rectify any harsh inference arising from such temporal denunciations, that Jesus informed his contemporaries, it should be more tolerable for those cities at the day of judgment, than for some in the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

" In the reign of Solomon, the tendency of the Jewish scheme to diffuse the knowledge of the true God appears increasingly conspicuous. The prosperity and wealth of this monarch, the magnificence of his temple, and, above all, his fame for wisdom, attracted universal attention; for 'his fame was in all nations round about, and there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon from all the kings of the earth.' 1 *Kings* iv. x." *Graves*, vol. ii. p. 298.

SECTION XXXIX.

Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.

THESE collections of moral sentiments, abound with illustrations of the truth and extent of this argument for the salvability of Heathen nations. They are either general maxims of human life, or universal principles of piety which apply, without exception, to the whole body of mankind.

"The eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good." *Prov.* xv. 15. "To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord, than sacrifice," xxi. 3. "The rich and the poor meet together, the Lord is the maker of them all," xxii. 2.

The book of Ecclesiastes commences with reflections on the vanity of human life, a topic which is applicable to individuals of all nations. "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man; for God shall bring every

work into judgment with every secret thing, whether it be good or bad," xii. 13.

From such maxims the inference is plain and irresistible, that Solomon viewed all mankind as living under the same moral and religious government; and that however they might differ, in the degrees of knowledge, yet that all were responsible according to their ability. I am not aware, there is a single sentiment in either collection which is founded on the distinction betwixt Jew and Gentile.

"God hath proposed to all men indifferently the same terms and conditions of gaining his love and favour, of enjoying his bounty, and of obtaining rewards and felicity from him. The same laws and rules of life are prescribed to all persons, as *men* and as *Christians*." *Barrow*, vol. iii. p. 305.

SECTION XL.

Prophetical Hints of Heathen Salvability.

The expressions of the several prophets, with regard to the extent and benefits of the Christian dispensation, are so universal and unlimited, that, I think, they can hardly be confined to the limits of Christendom, when we consider its small extent, as compared to the whole habitable world. A few examples will illustrate my meaning.

"I will give thee for a light unto the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation even to the end of the earth." *Isa.* xlix. 6. "I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted; behold these shall come from far, and lo, these from the north and the west, and those from the land of Sinim. Sing O heavens, rejoice O earth," &c. ver. 11—13. "Thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and shall make the desolate places inhabited," liv. "The maker of the whole earth shall he be called," ver. 5. "Ho, every one

that thirsteth," &c. See ch. lv. "The forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee," lx. 5. "To comfort all that mourn," lxi. passim. "Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham acknowledge us not," lxiii. 16. "As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the seed of David my servant," xxxiii. 22. "Under it (the Gospel) shall dwell fowl of every wing," *Ezek.* xvii. 23.

These and similar passages, I am aware, are generally construed as relating *exclusively* to the members of the Christian Church; nor can it be questioned that they have a more immediate reference to those who are thus professedly called. But it deserves consideration, whether they may not also admit of a more wide and comprehensive interpretation. I would submit, then, whether they may not relate to the *dispensation*, as well as to the *revelation* of the Gospel; and whether it is not in this sense, that Messias was styled "the desire of all nations," &c.

And here, also, it should be considered,

whether, when the *Gentiles* are thus mentioned, in plain contradiction to the *Jews*, it can be defensible to confine the acceptation of the word exclusively to *Christians*, or *converted* Gentiles. Thus, when the Psalmist declares of Christ, "Thou shalt make me the head of the Heathen," does it seem natural to put such a meaning on his expression, as that by which the *majority* of the Heathen must be altogether excluded? These observations are of very wide extent, and they will be found to relate, not only to the ancient prophets, but to many parts of the New Testament. Thus the Baptist applies to the advent of Christ the words of Esaias, "Every valley shall be filled, every mountain brought low, the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways smooth, and *all flesh* shall see the salvation of our God," *Luke* iii. 5, 6.

If it may be laid down as a general canon of criticism, that "as no Scripture is of private interpretation," it is, for the most part, safer to extend, than to contract its meaning. If there be, as Lord Bacon

expresses it, a "germinant quality" in every part of God's revelations, then such expressions seem to have a latitude and longitude about them which can hardly be compressed within the bounds of the Christian Church.

And still further to confirm these observations, we should remember, the amazing length and breadth which are given to such prophecies in the New Testament. Thus Simeon, when he beheld the Messias, applied to him the predictions of Isaiah in all their extent. "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles," &c. *Luke* ii. 29, 32. "The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of *all* nations, and all the ends of the world have seen the salvation of our God," lii. 10.

So also our Saviour applies to himself these prophecies in all their amplitude. See *Luke* iv. 17—21.

SECTION XLI.

General Intimations of Mercy towards the Heathen.

WHEN God was about to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah for their enormous wickedness, Abraham exclaimed, "Shall not the judge of *all the earth* do right?" *Gen.* xviii. 23—25. The answer which God returned on this occasion evinced, that his love and equity were extended over mankind at large, and not confined to the Patriarch's family.

But there are occasional notices of Heathen nations in different parts of the Bible, which seem clearly to establish this point. "At what time I speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up and pull down and destroy it, if that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil I thought to do unto unto them." *Jer.* xviii. 7—10. "I am the Lord who exercise loving kindness, judgment and righteousness, &c. *in*

the earth," *Jer.* ix. 24. Such passages are clear intimations of God's care and kindness of the Gentile world.

But still further this appears, even from God's "dealings with the Israelites, which were often regulated by those nations amongst whom they were." Thus when the Israelites were exposed to the wrath of God for their frequent rebellion and idolatries, Moses entreats for them lest the *Egyptians* should say, "For mischief did he bring them out," &c. *Exod.* xxxii. 12. So also when they rebelled in the wilderness, he urges the same argument, "Then the *Egyptians* will hear it, for thou broughtest up this people with thy might from amongst them." *Numb.* xiv. 13. *Deut.* ix. 28. And we have a large commentary on such passages in the prophet Ezekiel, ch. xx. from which, it plainly appears, that a very strong consideration for the tenderness and forbearance of God towards the *Jews,* was his care and attention to the *Heathen* nations around.

Even the judgments which are either denounced or entreated on the Gentile

nations, have an evident reference to this argument. "He that chastiseth the Heathen, shall he not correct?" *Psal.* xciv. 10. "Put them in fear, O Lord, that the nations may know themselves to be but men." *Psal.* ix. 10. Thus also David implores blessings on the Israelites for the moral and spiritual benefit of the Heathen. "God be merciful unto us and bless us, that thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health unto all nations," &c. *Psal.* lxvii.

When it is considered, how easy it would have been to have recorded in Scripture the universal condemnation of Gentile nations, such passages become a strong evidence that the damnatory decisions of Fulgentius and Augustine concerning them are totally at variance with the mild and merciful doctrine of the Bible. "Think not that Christianity doth teach, that all those who were not of the Jewish nation, or Church, or that are not now of the Christian Church, were so cast off and forsaken by God, as the devils are, to be left utterly hopeless and remediless; or that

they were upon no other terms of salvation than man in innocency was under, which was 'Obey perfectly and live, or if thou sin, thou shalt die.' For this had been to leave them as hopeless as the devils, when once they had sinned." *Baxter's Reasons*, p. 399.

"All men have sinned, and are fallen short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." *Rom.* iii. 3. All men are justified, *i. e.* according to God's favourable intention and design. Yea, the very reason why God permitted sin and death to prevail so universally, is intimated to be his design of extending a capacity of life and righteousness unto all. "He hath shut up all under sin, that he might have mercy upon all." *Barrow*, vol. iii. p. 316.

SECTION XLII.

Prophetic Descriptions of Christ.

It deserves the consideration of all who maintain the doctrines of the Divinity of Christ, and of his atoning sacrifice, and who seek to support these doctrines by an appeal to the prophetic declarations of the Messias; whether such texts can be brought to bear on those points, if we exclude the great majority of mankind from the benefits of his advent.

If, for example, we interpret the celebrated passage of Isaiah ix. 6, 7. "Unto us a child is born," &c., as a proof of the full and proper divinity of Christ; let it be considered, whether any thing short of universal redemption can be ascribed to one "who has the government on his shoulders, who shall be called the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace." Or, if we think that Christ was "*the Shiloh* to whom the gathering of the nations should be," let it be

considered, whether this does not refer to *all the nations?* or, if we assert that he is described as the King "who shall reign in righteousness," "who shall be an ensign for the people," as "a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in dry places." (See *Isa.* xxxii. and lxi.) Let it be determined, whether such ascriptions can be reconciled to the exclusion of the Heathen from the benefits of the Gospel dispensation.

"The whole import of Jonah's mission partakes of the Christian character. When we see that he is sent to carry the tidings of judgment, but to exemplify the grant of mercy, to a great *Heathen* city, &c. without staying to discuss whether all this be a *formal type* of the genius of the Christian religion, it is plainly a *real example* of some of its chief properties, in the manifested efficacy of repentance, the grant of pardon, and the communication of God's mercy to *the Heathen world.*" *Davison on Prophecy*, p. 368.

SECTION XLIII.

Nineveh.—B. C. 860.

"ARISE go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness is come up before me," &c. *Jonah* iii. The prophet fulfilled his commission; the Ninevites repented "in sackcloth and ashes, and God saw their works, that they turned from their evil ways, and God repented of the evil which he said he would do unto them and he did it not." ver. 5—10.

Such is a signal and decisive evidence for our argument. First, It is an example of a great *Heathen* city "of three days' journey" in circumference, which was saved from destruction on its timely repentance and reformation. Secondly, It evinces, that the souls of these Pagans were as dear to God as those of his peculiar people. Thirdly, It is a proof, that every nation shall be accepted according to its moral ability. Nothing is here said or insinuated respecting the inhabitants becoming Jewish

proselytes, or respecting their faith in the Messias. Their repentance was that of moral improvement. "Let us turn every man from his evil way, and from the violence of his hands," ver. 8.

And, that no one may say, this was a merely temporal deliverance, and that it had no relation to their eternal condition, let us remember what Christ has declared concerning it: "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonas," &c. *Matt.* xii. 41.

But, if the unwillingness of the Jewish prophet to undertake this mission, arose, as *Archbishop Sharp* conjectures, from his regarding the mission to a *Heathen* country as an ill omen to his own nation, the *Jews*; then, the inference becomes still stronger in relation to our argument; and, then, how apposite is the Divine remonstrance: —"Hadst *thou* compassion on the gourd, &c. and should not *I* have compassion on *such* a multitude," &c. *Ch.* iv. 10. 14.

SECTION XLIV.

Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar.

B.C. 500—530.

THESE were the sovereigns of Babylon during the captivity of the Jewish nation. They were both professed idolaters, and, as such, the former had commanded the Jews to worship his image of gold. But he was so wrought upon by the miraculous deliverance of certain Jews whom he had cast into a fiery furnace, that he commanded his people to reverence the God of Israel, "because no other God could deliver after that sort." *Dan.* iii.

The same monarch was afterwards exercised with great afflictions, which produced such a salutary effect on his mind, that he made this acknowledgment: "Now, I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, and extol, and honour the King of Heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment, and those that walk in pride he is able to abase." *Dan.* iv. 37.

But his son and successor, Belshazzar,

forgot his father's good example; "he did not humble his heart, *though he knew all this*," &c. *Dan.* v. 22. And he was accordingly punished. "In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain," &c. ver. 30.

From this account, it is plain, these Pagan monarchs were treated by God, just as Jews or Christians are treated by him. The one was pardoned on his repentance; the other was punished for his contumacy. But, if so, it follows that, whether amongst Pagans or others, "when the wicked turneth away from his wickedness, he shall save his soul alive."

"It was during the captivity of the Jews, and their consequent dispersion amongst the inhabitants of the most illustrious empire in the civilized world, that God principally employed them as the means of exciting the attention of *the Heathen* to his majesty and his providence," &c. *Graves*, vol. ii. p. 306.

SECTION XLV.

Cyrus.—B. C. 530—430.

THIS illustrious character of Pagan antiquity forms a striking link in the chain of prophecy, and he is also a striking evidence for the salvability of Pagan nations. "The Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, that he made a proclamation, &c. Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, the Lord God of heaven hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem," &c. *Ezra* i. The same monarch is termed by Isaiah, "the Lord's shepherd" (ch. xliv. 28); and "the Lord's anointed" (ch. xlv. 1.).

Without giving credit to *all* the virtues which Xenophon has ascribed to Cyrus, it is difficult not to believe, that he was an eminently moral character, and that, *as such*, he was noticed and blessed by God. Whether you consider him, then, as described by sacred or prophane historians, it seems impossible to separate him from

our general argument. "I have raised him up in righteousness: I will direct all his ways." *Isaiah* xlv. 13.

These observations may also be extended, in some degree, to Darius, Artaxerxes, and the other Gentile princes who were connected with the Jews in the building of the second temple. They apply also to the whole book of Esther, and to the transactions of Ahasuerus with the Jews. But, when it is remembered, that Ahasuerus reigned "over an hundred and twenty provinces from India even to Ethiopia," and "that the Jews had light, and gladness, and joy in every province, and that many of the *people* of the land became Jews" (See *Ch.* i. and viii. 17.);—these circumstances will go far to establish our general conclusion.

"These public testimonies to the majesty of the God of Israel, must have contributed materially to check error and idolatry, in a country where the form of the government rendered the examples of the monarchs so powerful," &c. *Graves*, vol. ii. p. 310.

SECTION XLVI.

The Dispersions of the Jews.

The various captivities and dispersions of the Jews which are recorded in Scripture, seem to have been principally ordained for the dissemination of religious knowledge amongst the Gentile nations. That a great effect must have been thus produced in every part of the east cannot be questioned; and, indeed, the fact, that the Jewish Scriptures were translated, during the age of the Ptolemies, into the most popular of all languages, is a plain confirmation of this reasoning.

In consequence of these events, vast multitudes of Gentiles became Jewish proselytes; some, under more strict, others, under more general obligations, as to the observance of the Jewish Law. But, even where this knowledge did not lead to proselytism, it must have had a great indirect influence on their religious sentiments.

These observations extend to almost every part of the Heathen world down to the present time. Jews were dwelling in the interior of Africa, long before it was visited by European travellers. But the effect of such sojourners on Pagan countries, though it cannot be minutely ascertained, must be considerable; and, in this way, even Mahometanism may not have been without its beneficial consequences.

It is the general purpose of these reflections to show, that the peculiar treatment of the Jews, whether in ancient or modern times, has been regulated in relation to the benefit and advantage of the Gentile world; and that the moral and religious influence of Judaism has, probably, been far more extensive than is commonly imagined. But this is an argument which, whilst it brings general credibility to the whole scheme of Revelation, throws a peculiar lustre on every topic which is connected with the salvability of Heathen nations, "I will set a sign amongst them, and I will send those that escape of them to the

nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow; to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory amongst the Gentiles." *Isaiah* lxvi. 19. See also ch. xlix. 5—12.

Note. On the subject of the foregoing Sections, I would refer *generally* to *Prideaux's Connection*, vol. i. ii. *Jenkins on Christianity*, vol. i. ch. vi—x. *Bishop Law's Theory of Religion*, part *2*, and *particularly* to *Dean Graves on the Pentateuch*, vol. ii. part *3*, in which he traces the "Effects of Judaism on the Gentiles." "The ancient Persians and modern Mahometans are possibly instances of people, who have had essential or natural religion enforced on their consciences by means of the Scripture, though they never had the genuine Scripture revelation," &c. *Butler's Analogy*, part 2. ch. vi.

Summary of the Argument.

THE evidences which have been adduced from the Jewish Economy in support of the salvability of Heathen nations, are numerous and diversified. Some arise out of express examples;—such is that of Jethro, of the Gibeonites, of Ruth and Naaman, &c. Others, from the principles of the Mosaic institutions;—such is the law respecting sins of ignorance, and the admission of Gentile proselytes. Some, from the general declarations of God's mercy and justice, others, from the influence of Judaism on the world at large. But, however they may differ from each other, they all conspire to bring credibility to our general conclusion. It will be observed, also, that these proofs multiply in number, and increase in importance, as the period for the fulfilment of the promise drew nigh; so that, at last, the whole history of the Jews appears blended with the histories and revolutions of surrounding empires.

It is the natural effect of this view of the Jewish Economy, to set aside all those objections of unbelievers which are founded on the supposition, that, during this long period, the Jews are represented in the Bible as being the exclusive favourites of Heaven. If such objections were founded in truth, they would be subversive, not only of the argument for the salvability of the Heathen, but also, in my opinion, of the credibility of the Jewish Scriptures. No revelation could be divine, which was founded on a partial and exclusive dispensation; because, it is impossible that God can act on any other than the principles of universal equity and justice. A revelation, as matter of history, may be more or less extensive, because it depends on the knowledge of those to whom it is addressed; but, considered in its reference to God, as its author, it cannot be otherwise than universal. See *Warburton, Div. Leg.* vol. ii. Appendix.

There is one argument, however, which could not be mentioned amongst our series of illustrations, but which naturally pre-

sents itself at their close.. It is plain, that the Jews, with all their advantages, had very imperfect notions of the Messias, and that they had nothing which amounted to that doctrine which we now term *faith in Christ*. But if so, the *knowledge* of this essential doctrine of Christianity cannot be indispensable for the salvation of those to whom it has not been revealed. Such is the corollary which I beg leave to add to the foregoing arguments.

Note. Whilst this work has been passing through the press, I have read Mr. *Davison's* admirable *Discourses on Prophecy.* His subject is quite distinct from that which is here treated of; but, to an attentive reader, it will suggest many indirect confirmations of this argument, and as such, I beg leave to refer to his luminous reasoning, which coincides also with much that I have formerly advanced in the *Connection of Natural and Revealed Theology.*

PART THE FOURTH.

The Life of Christ.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

We have now arrived at the threshold of the Christian Revelation, "when the fulness of the time was come," that "the seed should appear to whom the promise had been made." If, then, this argument for the salvability of Heathen nations may be deemed solid and satisfactory, from the evidence which has been adduced from the Old Testament; it may be reasonably expected to become still more clearly established, from the actions and declarations of Christ and his apostles.

Still, I would caution the reader, not to expect more than the nature of the case admits. The New Testament, as well as the Old, being addressed to those who have the means of reading it, must be

chiefly occupied with the *Revelation* of the religion, and with enforcing its doctrines on the members of the Church. As a *system* and *dispensation* of mercy for the world at large, it must be gathered rather incidentally, than directly, from its doctrines and declarations. But, in making this acknowledgment, I am not wishing the reader, by any means, to concede the point without adequate and sufficient evidence. It is to the *kind* of proof, not to its *degree* or *amount*, that I would solicit his candour.

And, first, if we consider what might be naturally expected on this subject from the founder of Christianity, it would, probably be of this nature;—that his office and character should be not of a national, but of a universal description; that he should, on all occasions, show a general love for mankind at large, rather than for a peculiar nation; that he should evince a marked attachment to the principles of universal equity, in opposition to any preference or partiality towards individuals; and that the actions of his life, as well as the principles of his doctrine, should

demonstrate his relationship to the whole human race.

If, then, Jesus had discovered a marked predilection for the Jews, as distinguished from the Gentiles; if he had loved to consort with scribes and pharisees, rather than with publicans and sinners; if he had insisted on ceremonies and sacrifices, rather than on the weightier matters of equity and justice, and if the principles which he inculcated had been narrow and exclusive; then, I acknowledge, there would have been a strong concurrent evidence arising from the whole of his life and character, that he did *not* design to be the Saviour of any but those who became his *avowed* disciples. But if, on the contrary, he professed to be "the Son of God and the Saviour of the world;" if he repeatedly declared, that "every man would be judged according to what he had;" if he discovered the greatest tenderness towards infancy and ignorance, and the strongest aversion towards pharisaical hypocrisy and spiritual pride; if his death, atonement, and resurrection are spoken of in terms,

which bear a common reference to the human race; then, I think, it must be admitted, such a view of his life and character naturally and powerfully leads us to the conclusion, *that all men are interested in him as the Redeemer of the world.*

Still, if it were his purpose and intention to make known the revelation to some, whilst others were to continue in ignorance; if it were his design to build up a church consisting of professed believers; it is plain, not only that the greater part of the promises would be made *expressly* to them, but that they would be distinguished by some advantages and privileges which no others could enjoy. Such are the sacraments and ordinances which Christ has enjoined to his Church, and which now place that church, in the same relation towards the Heathen world, which the Jewish Church formerly possessed towards the unproselyted Gentiles. But, as the capability of salvation was not exclusively belonging to the Jews, so neither is it now confined to the members of the Christian church; and as the high and exalted manner

in which the privileges of the Israelites are spoken of in the Old Testament, ought not so to be construed, as implying or insinuating the condemnation of all other nations; so, neither should the expressions of the evangelists concerning the privileges of believers be so exclusively interpreted, as to imply the destruction and condemnation of those to whom such privileges have not been granted.

When it is considered, that by a single positive and explicit declaration, Jesus might have decided that none but the members of his church could possibly hope for eternal happiness; when a single damnatory passage in the Gospel, like that of Augustine or Fulgentius, would have determined the question;—I think it must be admitted, that if the arguments which we shall now adduce, had been far fewer in number, and far smaller in amount, still that such silence ought to be acknowledged as a presumptive, if not a decisive, evidence, "He is the Propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world."

SECTION XLVII.

St. John's Declaration of Christ's Divinity.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men." "That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." *John* i. 1—9. See *Bp. Horne's Sermons*, p. 79.

If these texts of Scripture (and the same observation will apply to all similar passages of the Old and New Testament) are to be understood as implying the proper divinity of Christ, "that by *Him* the world was made," &c., the conclusion follows, that his character and mission are of universal importance to all men; and consequently, that the *Heathen* are interested in him, as the Maker, the Saviour, and the Judge of mankind. Their ignorance of his mission can form no argument against this

inference: "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not," ver. 10.

To ascribe to Christ an equality with the Father, and then to limit the benefits of his mission to the members of the Christian Church; to ascribe to his atonement an infinite value, and then to confine its importance to a small portion of mankind; this is one out of various contradictions which have grown up with the systems of artificial theology. If Christ be God, then, *as God* he must bear the same relation to all men. To represent him as the national and tutelary Deity of the Jews or the Christians, is to explode his divinity, and to reduce him to the level of Moses or one of the prophets.

This remark is of very wide and comprehensive application; it applies to every text in the Old and New Testament, which would show that Jesus is Jehovah. "I and my Father are one." "He who hath seen me, hath seen the Father." "Before Abraham was, I am," &c. All passages of this description, if adduced to prove the

divinity of Christ, must fail of their effect, unless we attribute to him such a universality in all his offices as can alone be suitable to Deity.

The force of this argument has long been felt by Unitarians, who would claim, on this account, a superiority over the system of orthodoxy. "It has often appeared to me," says Dr. Carpenter, "that if Unitarians did no more than annihilate the dreadful tenet, that all must be plunged into eternal and irremediable anguish, who do not possess faith in Christ, and even particular forms of faith; it would have been worthy of all acceptation. The Unitarian has more honourable notions of the God of love, than to imagine that he will make hundreds and thousands of millions miserable, solely because they do not receive him as their Saviour, whose name they have never heard. *And yet if this be not so, then the doctrines of modern orthodoxy are not true.*" *Beneficial Effects of Unitarianism,* p. 21.

——— Pudet hæc opprobria nobis,
Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli.

SECTION XLVIII.

The Angelic Mission.

SINCE angels came down from heaven to earth to proclaim the birth of Christ, it seems utterly inconsistent with such an embassy, to suppose the intelligence which they brought had not a universal relation to mankind. To have proclaimed a local or partial benefit, appears altogether at variance with their characters, nor were such the terms of their tidings: "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good-will towards men." These expressions are not capable of a confined or limited meaning, and to interpret them in such a manner as would exclude the great majority of mankind in all ages from the beneficial influence of Christ's advent, is to deprive them of their necessary meaning. "By this song," says Bishop Taylor, "they not only referred to the peace which at that time put all the world at ease; but to the great peace, which the new-born prince should make

between his earth and *all mankind.*" *Life of Christ,* vol. i. p. 69.

Here then is the difficulty of all who deny the doctrine of universal redemption, as it relates to the Heathen,—they admit the annunciation of the Gospel to have been universal, but they confine its good effects to the knowledge of a limited portion of the human race.

Note. "The expression (παντὶ τῷ λαῷ) 'to all *the* people,' seems adapted to the present conceits of the Jewish nation, which apprehended nothing of God's favourable intentions to the community of men; but, in effect, it is to be understood extensively, in reference to *all* people. For the Saviour, the Christ, the Lord, of whom this good news did report, was not only to be the Redeemer of that small people, but of the world, of every nation, of all mankind. 'Men's eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of *all the peoples,* πάντων τῶν λαῶν.'" *Barrow,* p. 349.

SECTION XLIX.

The Eastern Sages.

At the birth of Jesus, certain philosophers or astrologers came from the East to worship him, being supernaturally directed by a star. "We have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him."

When it is remembered, that these sages formed a part of the Gentile and Pagan world, and that, as far as appears from Scripture, they were allowed to retain the manners, usages, and opinions of their native countries, and that even their errors and superstitions formed no bar to their acceptance, this embassy must be allowed to constitute an important ingredient in our argument; nor is it unimportant to consider, that if they came from Arabia, they came from a country which has never been permanently brought under the Christian faith. As such, I apprehend, they are to be viewed rather as the representatives of the unconverted nations, than

as the representatives of professed believers. But, at any rate, the inference is clear, and indubitable, that such nations must possess some interest in the Redeemer who allowed his advent to be adorned with the gold and frankincense and myrrh of these Heathen worshippers.

"God who is the universal Father of all men, at the nativity of the Messias, gave notice of it to all the world, as they were represented by the grand division of Jews and Gentiles. To the Jewish shepherds, by an angel; to the Eastern Magi, by a star. For the Gospel is of universal dissemination, not confined within the limits of a national prerogative, but catholic and diffused." *Taylor's Life of Christ,* vol. i. p. 81.

"These Sages were Gentiles, aliens by nature, like ourselves, from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise, representing, as it were, *the whole heathen world.*" See *Bp. Horne's Sermon on the Epiphany.*

SECTION L.

St. John the Baptist.

THE ministry of St. John forms the connecting link between the Law and the Gospel. It admitted all on their repentance,—Gentiles, as well as Jews, were welcome to its benefits. It does not appear that John insisted on the rite of circumcision, nor is it probable that the publicans and soldiers who were baptised by him were Jewish proselytes. When they enquired of him their duties, he enforced on them those duties which were belonging to their respective stations. To the publicans, he enjoined moderation in their demands, because they were too generally guilty of extortion; to the soldiers, gentleness of behaviour and contentment with their pay, because they frequently committed acts of violence and were often turbulent. Upon these simple acknowledgments, "they were baptized in Jordan confessing their sins." *Matt.* iii.

It is impossible to peruse this account of

St. John's ministry, and not to perceive, that "every man shall be accepted according to that which he hath." The admission of publicans and soldiers whose faith must have been so very partial, and whose practice so imperfect, intimates, in no dubious manner, the truth of our general argument; whilst the rebukes which he gave to the rigid and sanctimonious Pharisee, show how little depends, in the sight of God, on the mere adherence to forms and ceremonies.—"Think not to say unto yourselves, we have Abraham for our father, for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." *Luke* iii. 8.

Whilst John was baptising, "all men were musing in their hearts whether he were the Christ or not;" they had arrived at no fixed or definite belief; but they were treated according to their circumstances, and though ignorant of Christ, their repentance was available "to the remission of their sins."

SECTION LI.

The Object of Christ's Mission.

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, to the end, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." *John* iii. 16, 17.

In this declaration, whilst the *general* tendency of the passage leads to our conclusion for the salvability of Heathen nations, as well as others, it must be owned, that the *specific* condition appears to make against us. To reconcile this apparent contradiction, I would submit the following considerations.

First, then, it is clear, that the express object and design on the part of God, was the salvation of *the world*. This is stated, both positively, and negatively, and therefore there can be no doubt concerning it. But the limitation is made to the believers

in Christ, because the *revelation* is addressed to them, and to them only. But to them it holds universally, that it is by faith or belief, they must secure the promised salvation. The difficulty is removed by remembering, that the *dispensation* relates to the whole world; whilst the *revelation* relates to those only who believe.

Secondly, this is apparent from the whole scope of this passage: "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved," an object which could not have been proposed, if the majority of mankind in all ages had been condemned for their involuntary ignorance of the Gospel.

Thirdly, it is to be inferred from our Saviour's next declaration, "He that believeth in him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, *because* he believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of God," &c. 18, 19. In these and similar passages, believers and unbelievers are opposed to each other.

But by unbelievers we are not to understand those who have never heard of the Gospel, but those who have heard it, and who reject its evidence. The Heathens are *neutral*, they are neither believers nor unbelievers, and if such had been condemned "*because* they have believed not in the name of the only begotten Son of God," the Gospel instead of "being tidings of great joy unto the people," had been the curse and condemnation of the great majority of the human race. How then could it have been affirmed "that God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved?"

Note. The following are some of the principal texts which speak of Christ, as the *Saviour of the world. John* i. 29., vi. 33. and 51.; 1 *John* ii. 2., iv. 14.; *John* xii. 47.; 2 *Cor.* v. 19.—"Is it not enough that Christ is called the Saviour of the world? You will say, Is it of the *whole* world? Yes,—'He is the Propitiation for the sins of *the whole world.*' You will say, Is it for *all* men in the world? Yes,—'He died for *all* men.' You will say, Is it for *every man?* Yes,—'He tasted death for every man.'" *Baxter's Universal Redemption,* p. 286.

SECTION LII.

The Woman of Samaria.

THE Samaritans, as we have already observed, (see Sect. 37.) were the descendants of some Heathen who conjoined the worship of the true God with their own idolatrous superstitions. They were hated and despised by the Jews, who scarcely held any intercourse with them. But, at the commencement of our Saviour's ministry, he resolved to shew that he would not countenance such national prejudices. Having met with a Samaritan woman, he entered into a friendly conversation with her, and though he plainly told her the Samaritans, as a nation, were in error, yet such was his desire for her welfare, that the first positive declaration of his own Messiahship was made by Christ to this poor Samaritan: "I that speak unto thee am He," &c. *John* iv. 7—26.

When the origin and circumstances of these Samaritans are considered, I cannot

but view this anecdote as affording great credibility to our general argument for the salvability of Heathen nations. They could not be esteemed regular members of the Jewish Church, nor were they possessed of what is now meant by Christian faith. "We know that this is the Christ, the *Saviour of the world.*" It was on the *universality* of the Messiah's mission, not on any privileged election, they grounded their faith, but if Christ be "the Saviour of the world," *in the sense of the Samaritans,* he is also the Saviour of the Heathen.

The proper attitude to review such facts of our Saviour's life, is to carry back our thoughts to the circumstances of his contemporaries. As yet, no Christian Church existed, no sacraments were ordained,—how imperfect, then, must have been their faith, even when they exclaimed,—"this is the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

SECTION LIII.

The Nobleman's Son.

HERE is another miracle performed on a Gentile family, and that under circumstances which must add great credibility to our argument for the salvability of those who have not heard of the Gospel. This nobleman, who was probably belonging to the court of Herod, seems at first, not to have viewed our Saviour as the Messias, but only as a teacher sent from heaven, who was enabled to perform miraculous cures. He did not conceive that his power extended to a distance, and therefore he besought his personal attendance. "Come down ere my child die." Jesus accepted the man according to this imperfect faith, ("except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe,") and granted the object of his prayer.

The nobleman believed and his whole house. But what did he believe? All the articles of the Christian faith? He believed

at most that Jesus was the Messias. Can there be a clearer evidence that every man is dealt with by God according to his circumstances, and according to what he has the means of knowing and believing?

Should it be objected, that this and similar anecdotes in our Saviour's life seem too minute to be connected with the general argument; we reply, that, as an evidence of the mind and character of the Redeemer, they afford a clear and lucid demonstration of the point at issue. To impute harshness, or indifference about millions, to One who could thus pity and compassionate individuals, were altogether incredible. So long as we are justified in deducing the wisdom and goodness of the Creator, from the smallest, as well as the grandest works of nature; these actions of Jesus, if he be the Son of God, may be cited as evidences of his love and mercy towards *all* mankind.

SECTION LIV.

The Widow of Sarepta and Naaman the Syrian.

In Sections 35 and 36, we have adduced these miraculous cures of Elijah and Elisha as affording evidence for our general argument in favour of Gentile nations in all ages of the world; and here we find a direct confirmation of this reasoning from the lips of our blessed Saviour: "I tell you of a truth, that many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, yet to none of them was Elias sent; *but he was sent to a woman of Sarepta, a city of Sidon.* And many lepers were in Israel, in the time of Elisha, the prophet, yet none of them were cleansed; *but he cleansed Naaman the Syrian.*" *Luke* iv. 25, 27. The tendency of this argument need not be pointed out; because it was so plainly directed against the national and exclusive notions of the Jews, that they immediately, on hearing it, "sought to kill Jesus." I have

ventured to remove the ambiguity which appears in our translation, since the whole force of the argument consists in making it clear, that these miracles were performed on *Gentiles*, in preference to Israelites. Hence we infer, not only that the saving mercies of God were of old extended to Heathen nations; but that Jesus also designed this conclusion to be drawn and felt by his contemporaries.

" It should have been recollected by the Jews, that the grand and capital promise made to Abraham was not limited to his natural posterity; but, on the contrary, in the most express terms which language could afford, extended to all others. It was the promise of the Seed, that is, the Messiah, in whom, not Israel only according to the flesh, but *all the nations of the earth* should be blessed. *Bishop Horne's Sermons.* p. 93.

SECTION LV.

Love your Enemies.

It deserves the consideration of all who doubt or deny the salvability of the Heathen, (that is of the great majority of mankind) whether such precepts as Jesus was continually inculcating on the Jews in opposition to their national prejudices, do not imply that the saving mercies of God are diffused over the whole world. "It was said by them of old time, thou shalt love thy neighbour, &c. but I say unto you, bless your enemies, &c. that ye may be the children of your heavenly Father, *for* he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good," &c. *Matt.* v. 43—48. Certain it is, that if we could believe the great body of mankind were excluded from the capability of salvation, we should be deprived of every motive to love them, and they would then stand nearly in the same relation to us as the fallen angels.

No man is called upon to exercise

greater benevolence than the Deity whom he adores. If, then, that Deity be partial and austere, "reaping where he hath not sown, and gathering where he hath not strawed," his worshippers will naturally indulge the same emotions; but, upon our principles, the mercy of God is "over all his works," and hence we can apprehend the beauty and obligation of universal charity; "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect," &c. v. 48.

Amidst the violent passions and animosities of Pagan nations, it is consolatory to trace some vestiges of kindness and placability. For many interesting examples of this kind, see Val. Maximus de Reconciliatione, lib. iv. c. 2. He thus unaffectedly introduces the subject; "Si placidum mare aspero, cœlumque ex nubilo serenum hilari aspectu sentitur, si bellum pace mutatum plurimum gaudii affert; offensarum etiam acerbitas deposita, candida relatione celebranda est." But how opposite was the practice of the Jews!

Non monstrare vias, eadem nisi sacra colenti;
Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos.

JUV.

SECTION LVI.

The Fowls of the Air.

When the opponents of Universal Redemption are pressed with the arguments arising out of the providential goodness of God, as displayed throughout the whole world, they reply, that the mercies of Creation have no connexion with those of Redemption. But so far was Jesus from favouring this distinction, that he continually illustrates the one by the other:— "Since not a sparrow," as he argues, "falls to the ground unnoticed by his Heavenly Father," it is very irrational to doubt his care of all mankind; and since He provides for their temporal wants and necessities, it must be very unjust to impute to Him the neglect of their spiritual and eternal interests. See *Matt.* vi. 26—30. We have the authority of Christ, therefore, to associate the kingdoms of nature and of grace, and to view their respective blessings as mutually related.

"Think not," says *Baxter*, "that all the mercies which Pagan nations have from God are no acts of grace, nor have any tendency to their conversion and salvation. Doubtless, it is the same Redeemer, even the eternal wisdom and word of God, who, before his incarnation, gave greater mercy to the Jews, and lesser to the Gentiles. He doth, by these mercies, oblige or lead men to repentance and gratitude, and reveal God as merciful and ready to forgive all capable sinners." *Reason for Christianity*, p. 400.

When our Saviour adds, "after all these things do the *Gentiles* seek," (ver. 32.) he does not accompany it with a word of blame or reproach. He exhorts his *disciples*, indeed, to aspire after higher and more heavenly things, because *they* were favoured with far higher means and motives for improvement. But this gentleness must be interpreted in favour of our general argument for the salvability of the Heathen; because, if Jesus had entertained the sentiments of Calvin, or Augustine respecting them, there could

not have been a more natural or appropriate opportunity for deciding their doom.

I revert with pleasure to the liberal and excellent sentiments of *Baxter*:—"Doubtless, mercy bindeth Heathens to know God as merciful, and to love him, and to improve that mercy to their attainment of more, and to seek after further knowledge, and to be better than they are; and they are set under a certain course of means, and appointed duties, in order to their recovery and salvation. Else it might be said, that they have nothing to do for their own recovery, and, consequently, no sin in omitting it. By all this, you may perceive that Christ did much by mercies and teaching before his incarnation, and, since, for all the world, which hath a tendency to their conversion, recovery, and salvation."—"If we are bound to believe, that God in giving them health and peace, and prosperity in this world intends nothing but evil to them, how can *the bountifulness and long-suffering of God be said to lead men to repentance*,"&c.—See *Goodwin's Redemption Redeemed.* p. 410.

SECTION LVII.

The Roman Centurion.

THERE is no reason to suppose that this officer was a Jewish proselyte, "though he loved their nation, and had built them a synagogue." *Luke* vii. 5. It may be inferred that he was not, from our Saviour's exclamation concerning him:—"I say unto you, I have not found such faith, no not in *Israel*." *Matt.* viii. 10.

What was his faith? Was it the belief of our Lord's divinity, or the admission of all the articles of the apostles' creed? Clearly not; he believed that Jesus was endued with miraculous powers from above; and this, together with his benevolent character, rendered him a fit object for our Saviour's assistance. "Think not," says *Baxter*, "that Christ can show no mercy, nor do any thing towards the salvation of a sinner, before he is known himself to the

sinner; especially, before he is known as an incarnate Mediator, or one that is to be incarnate. He struck down Paul, and spoke to him from heaven, before Paul knew him; he sent Philip to the eunuch, before he knew him; and Peter to Cornelius, and sendeth the Gospel to Heathen nations, *before* they know him. If the apostles themselves, even after they had lived long with Christ, and heard his preaching, yea, and wrought miracles themselves, did not yet understand that he must suffer, and die, and rise again, and send down the Spirit, &c.; you may conjecture, by this, what the common faith of those before Christ's coming was, who were saved." *Baxter's Reasons for Christianity*, p. 399.

This reasoning applies, in all its force, to those who were the contemporaries of our blessed Lord, and who experienced the effects of his miracles. Their faith must have been not only different in degree, but in kind, from that which we now call Christian faith. Yet, the be-

nevolent Messias accepted them according to their circumstances and means of knowledge. Who, then, can suppose that he will condemn the unconverted nations for not calling on his name?—"How should they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?"

It should be remembered that Christianity, as a *Revelation*, was not fully made known during the life of Christ, though as a *Dispensation* it *must* then have existed in all its force. Hence it is, that, even in our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, the peculiar *doctrines* of the Gospel are not inculcated. But this is an evidence, that the knowledge of such doctrines, however important to us, cannot be indispensable to the salvation of those to whom they are not yet revealed.

SECTION LVIII.

Chorazin and Bethsaida.

THROUGHOUT the whole of this argument, we have been contending for the principle, "that every man shall be rewarded according to that which he hath;" and here this principle is proclaimed by Jesus, as that by which every one shall be tried at the day of judgment. "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! &c. I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah at the day of judgment, than for thee." *Matt.* xi. 21—24.

It is worthy of remark, that Jesus advances this principle on the same hypothesis as that which pervades this whole argument for the salvability of the Heathen:—"*If* the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done," &c.; that is, *if* the Gospel had been preached, and my miracles had been performed, at Tyre or Sidon, they would have repented, &c.

Hence, it is plain, the punishment which

was inflicted on those Heathen cities, was inflicted not on account of their ignorance of the Gospel (for this only helped to extenuate their guilt), but on account of the positive sins which they committed against the clear light of their own consciences. See *John* iii. 19. Apply this reasoning to the Pagans at large, and you will perceive that, the whole of our conclusion is deducible from this assertion of Jesus.

But should any follower of Augustine dwell on the word *tolerable*, and contend that *some* degree of punishment shall still be inflicted on all the Heathen, then, it remains for him to show, that they have *all* been equally guilty with the inhabitants of Sodom, and that they have had equal means of repentance afforded them.

But the truth is, that it is in vain to argue with those who adduce even the virtues of Pagans only as "splendid sins." To others, it may be sufficient to hint, that these enquiries have not led to any presumptuous examination concerning the number of the Heathen who *shall* be saved, but merely concerning the possibility of salvation as

relative to all. In a word, we oppose the position of the Calvinists, as laid down by *Dr. Gill*:—" Redemption, if for all, must be useless to those who never were favoured with the means of grace, as all the nations of the world, excepting Israel, for many hundred years, were; and since the coming of Christ, though the Gospel has, in all ages, had a greater spread, yet, not preached to all, nor is it now to many nations, who have never heard of Christ and of Redemption by him." *Body of Divinity*, p. 334. To perceive how closely this reasoning is connected with the denial of Heathen salvability, we need only adduce the Calvinistic sentiments of Bishop Davenant: Quis nescit inter Philosophos, Socratem, Platonem, Xenocratem, inter Romanos, Fabricium, Scipionem, Catonem, lumine naturæ, præ cœteris hominibus, bene usos fuisse; nemo tamèn horum Evangelicæ gratiæ idcircò particeps evasit. Non ergò in meliore aut pejore usu luminis naturalis quærenda est causa, &c. sed in Dei vocantis, aut non vocantis, beneplacito. *De Morte Christi*, p. 190. *Edit. Cant.* 1683.

SECTION LIX.

The unpardonable Sin.

" I SAY unto you, all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, &c.; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven." *Mark* iii. 28. *Luke* xii. 10.

Much has been written on this mysterious subject; but it would be foreign to our argument to enter into any account of the various opinions of commentators concerning it. It is sufficient to observe, that as the Heathen are by their situation rendered utterly incapable of contracting such guilt, so they incur no such tremendous danger. All *their* sins may be forgiven; and, inasmuch as they have been sins of mere ignorance, they will be forgiven; and this, on account of that all-sufficient atonement, which hath been provided for the sins of the whole world.

It is curious to observe, that even Augustine and his followers contend only for a *mitigated* punishment, with regard to the

more virtuous Heathen. They are to suffer everlastingly, but they are to be only "beaten with few stripes." I cannot but observe, that this is a virtual abandonment of their argument, because, if punished at all *for their ignorance of the Gospel*, it would seem their punishment should be inflexible and extreme. Once allow involuntary ignorance to be deserving of punishment, and, then, the greatest ignorance will deserve the greatest punishment.

"There is an ignorance which doth wholly excuse from all manner of guilt, and that is, an absolute and invincible ignorance, when a person is wholly ignorant of the thing, which, *if he knew*, he would be bound to do. In this case a person is in no fault, if he did not do what he never knew, nor could know to be his duty." *Tillotson.*

Query. Is not this precisely the ignorance of the Heathen, with regard to Christ?

SECTION LX.

The Canaanitish Woman.

THIS is on many accounts one of the most remarkable miracles of Jesus; but, on none is it more deserving of attention, than as it bears a reference to this argument for the salvability of Heathen nations. In the language of the Jews, the Canaanites were a cursed nation; and if any people could be supposed to be excluded from the mercies of God, it would have been this ill-fated people. Yet here we have an example, that even a Canaanite was not excluded from the possibility of salvation; and the inference which is thence derivable to all other nations, is too obvious to require any remark.

The manner in which Jesus tries this poor Gentile is, however, so closely connected with our argument, that it ought to be noticed. For the purpose of eliciting her faith, he begins to reason with her on the exclusive principle of the Jews:—

"I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." *Matt.* xv. 24. Nay, he even condescends to adopt their usual language, by calling her "a *dog*." But, this appearance of severity was only meant to conceal the extent of his mercy; and so will it probably be found, when some, who have never heard of his name, shall partake of the benefits of his passion.

Such is the natural inference, as connected with our argument. Yet it is painful to observe, that Bishop Hall would give it a Calvinistic tendency: "God's word is like himself, no respecter of persons; the wild Kerne, the rude Scythian, the savage Indian are alike to it. *The mercy of God will be sure to find out those that belong to his Election.*" But to this high authority, I beg leave to oppose the comment of Bishop Horsley: "No Jew was *individually* a child, nor any Gentile *individually* a dog, as a Jew or a Gentile, but as a good or a bad man." See *Hall's Contemplations*, and *Horsley's Sermons* on this subject.

SECTION LXI.

" They glorified the God of Israel."
Matt. xv. 31.

MANY of the miraculous cures of Jesus were performed on Gentile individuals, and I apprehend that this expression leads to this conclusion, on the occasion here referred to. But, in thus making the blind to see, the dumb to speak, and the deaf to hear, without any regard to their country or religious sentiments, a very strong inference arises, that Christ, in his character and office as the Saviour and Redeemer of the world, acts on the same free and impartial principles. The fairest method of trying this reasoning, is to suppose that he had cured none but those who professed their belief in him as the predicted Messias, and that he had made their faith, on *all* occasions, the sole condition on which he administered to their temporal necessities.

That this was not always the case, may

be safely asserted. " Great multitudes followed him, and he healed them there." *Matt.* xix. 2. " All they that had any sick with divers diseases, brought them unto him, and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them." *Luke* iv. 40. In these, and many similar cases, Jesus appears to have performed his miracles, without demanding any confessions, either from the patients, or those who brought them. " He went about doing good, and healing all manner of disease."

Let it be considered then, whether we are not involuntarily led to infer from such acts of mercy spontaneously exercised on the bodies of Pagans and Idolaters, the far greater mercy of God towards their spiritual wants and necessities, and whether it would not imply a *moral contradiction* to argue in any other manner. For various illustrations of this kind, I would refer to my Sermons *on the Parables and Miracles.* See particularly p, 115 and 302.

SECTION LXII.

Impartial Retribution.

"THE Son of Man shall come in the glory of the Father, with his angels; and then shall he reward every man according to his works." *Matt.* xvi. 27.

On this declaration, we observe, *first*, that it is *Christ* who shall judge all men: consequently, he must bear a previous relation to all;—and yet, how could he bear this relation, unless he had been their Saviour and Redeemer? *Secondly*, that "every man shall be rewarded according to his works;" and, consequently, that every man's situation, country, &c. shall be taken into the account. Whilst plain words have any meaning, this single declaration is sufficient to prove that the Heathen will be tried by Christ, in his character as the Redeemer of the world; and that no more will be demanded from them, than they have had the adequate means of performing; every due allowance being made for weak-

ness and infirmities. " Thou, Lord, art *merciful;* for thou rewardest every man according to his work." *Psal.* lxii. 12. Yet, perhaps, this allowance may not always be so large as might be imagined. " The best dispositions," says *Paley,* " may subsist under the most depressed, the most afflicted fortunes. A West-Indian slave, who, amidst his wrongs, retains his benevolence, I, for my part, look upon as amongst the foremost of human candidates for the reward of virtue." *Natural Theology,* p. 528.

Since it is evident from Scripture, that the Heathen will be universally judged by Christ, and since it is equally evident that Christ will judge the world, in virtue of his Mediatorial Character; it follows, I apprehend, by plain and incontrovertible inference, that He now stands in the same relation to them, as though they had been personally acquainted with his character. If his relation as their Creator be not affected by their ignorance, why should it affect his relation as Redeemer?

SECTION LXIII.

The little Child.

"And Jesus took a little child, and set him in the midst, and said unto them, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye can, in no case, enter into the kingdom of heaven." *Matt.* xviii. 2. "There were brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and his disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven: and he laid his hands on them, and blessed them." *Matt.* xix. 13—15.

These actions of our Lord are very interesting and important; first, as they show the universal benevolence of his mind; and, secondly, as they intimate the salvation of all infants, dying in their infancy; consequently, the salvation of all *Heathen infants;* and these are a multitude which no man can number.

One is grieved to see, how little the

study of theological systems, has enabled many excellent and learned divines to catch the plain inference which arises from these actions of Jesus. "Upon the whole," says *Archbishop Laurence*, "Zuinglius believed that all infants, without exception, dying before the commission of actual crime, are heirs of the kingdom of heaven; Luther, all born of those who are themselves within the Christian covenant, leaving the fate of Heathen children to the revelation of God's mercies in a future life. But Calvin, only such as the Almighty has been pleased to distinguish by a mysterious decree of personal election." *Bamp. Lect.* p. 281.

Even the pious Dr. Watts could bring himself to ask the following queries:— "Are all children which die secured of heaven either by reason or Scripture? If the infant seed of Abraham, and his pious followers, are taken to dwell with God, as their God,—are the children of wicked parents as happy too? Are you sure they are not subject to any pains hereafter, or that they are not annihilated?" *Ruin and Recov.* p. 72.

Mr. Dodwell believed the Heathen would be annihilated at the resurrection; whilst Dr. Coward asserted they would be annihilated at death.

It was said by Cicero, that there was no opinion, however strange or absurd, for which you might not find some authority amongst philosophers; and, I fear, the same assertion might be made respecting divines. Amongst the reformers, Zuinglius appears to have been the only one who maintained what is as incontestably certain as these actions of Christ, or as the love and equity of God. To talk of "covenanted or uncovenanted" mercies, as applied to the salvation of infants dying in their infancy, appears to be devoid of all meaning. Nor could I blame any man for becoming a professed unbeliever, *if* such were the doctrines of the Old or New Testament.

The doubts of Luther on this subject, as they regard the children of Pagans, seem to be almost as shocking as the decisions of Calvin. "Turcarum et Judæorum liberi salutis participes non fiunt, quia Christo non sistuntur. De Eth-

nicorum pueris aliud judicium est, qui sunt extra ecclesiam; quanquam fortasse de his quoque mitius aliquid statuetur, quam de adultis. Sed hæc futura vita aperiet. Cavendum autem studiose est, nequid pronunciemus, quod verbo non est revelatum, sicut certa verbi revelatio est de baptizatis, ut ante Christi adventum de circumcisis, quod sunt recepti a Deo in gratiam." *Lutheri Opera.* vol. iv. p. 315, cited by *Laurence, Bamp. Lec.* p. 265.

Such are the terrific doubts and distinctions which have come down to us in almost unbroken succession from the Romish Church, all of which arise from the dogma, "that there is no salvation out of the Church;" a dogma well suited to Popery, but which every Protestant should scorn to adopt. This may be called *ecclesiastical* Calvinism, as opposed to the *popular* Calvinism of the present age. But the one is just as horrible and unscriptural as the other, nor do I see any thing to choose between them.

Who, and what were these children of whom our Lord said, "of such is the

kingdom of heaven?" Probably they were the children of Jews; if so, they were circumcised, and not baptized. Where then is the foundation in Scripture for all this scepticism respecting *Heathen infants?* But the whole scruple arises from supposing, that the promises of God in Christ were made either to the Jewish or Christian Church *exclusively*, and not for the whole body of mankind. So long as this doctrine is maintained, the followers of Calvin will always be able to maintain their ground, and unless the doctrines of orthodox theology be brought to correspond with the attributes of God, there will never be a lack of Unitarians and Deists.

Unless all children, whether of Jews, Turks, Pagans or Christians, come into the world in a salvable condition, it is plain, that the doctrine of universal redemption cannot be maintained; and if so, the Calvinists have decidedly the best of the argument, when they assert, that those only are salvable who shall be finally

saved, and that this is predetermined by an eternal decree.

The whole argument, therefore, turns on this simple question; whether Christ died to redeem *the world*, that is, all mankind, or whether he died to redeem only the members of the *Christian Church*. But, I do not find that the term to redeem the Church occurs any where in Scripture; whereas, the term to "redeem or to save the world," is constantly recurring. When St. John says, that "he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world," he clearly signifies, that the peculiar promises which are given to the Church, should not tempt us to forget the universal promise made to all mankind. But there can be no such promise, if you deny the salvability of all men; and therefore, unless the doctrine of universal redemption be maintained as it respects all mankind, it can scarcely be maintained as it relates to *all* who are called Christians.

The Romish Church asserted that all

unbaptized infants were lost, whereas, our rubrick only asserts, "it is certain, by God's word, that children, who are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved." This rubrick appears to be directed against the harsh decisions of the Genevan Reformer, but, I apprehend, that its silence about unbaptized infants, is not to be construed as implying any doubt respecting their salvability. This opinion derives strong confirmation from several parts of our liturgy, but especially from that answer in the Catechism, "I believe in God the Son who hath *redeemed* me and all mankind;" because, in the next answer, "I believe, in God the Holy Ghost who *sanctifieth* me and all the elect people of God," our reformers seem to have extended the benefit of Christ's redemption to all, while they confined the peculiar operations of the Spirit to the members of the Church. And yet even this benefit seems afterwards to be conceded, in some sort, to all. "I desire of my Lord God our heavenly Father, who is the giver of all goodness, to

send his *grace* unto me, and to *all people*, that we may worship him, serve him and obey him as we ought to do."

Yet, although it were granted, that our reformers had not made up their minds on this subject, as *it regarded the Heathen*, still there is nothing which should prevent us from candidly and impartially examining the question. If it can be shown, that the peculiar promises which Christ has given to his Church, were not designed to interfere with the more general promises which belong to all mankind; we shall not become the worse Churchmen, because we seek to extend the benefits of redemption beyond the pale of Christendom. But so long as any doubts remain respecting the salvability of *infants*, it is mockery to advocate the doctrine of universal redemption. To speak of *all* men, when we mean only some, is to introduce jargon and sophistry into the most important articles of our Religion.

SECTION LXIV.

The lost Sheep.

"If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray," &c. *Matt.* xviii. 12.

Though this is but a continuation of the foregoing discourse, it deserves our especial consideration. It was spoken by Jesus, when "the Publicans and sinners drew near to hear him," *Luke* xv. 1—10., and therefore, it bears a peculiar relation to our reasoning for the salvability of Heathen nations. If it be the will of our heavenly Father, that not one of those little ones should perish, can we suppose it possible, that he has created millions of adults without any capability of working out their salvation?

This arguing by plain and direct inference, is what we must acknowledge to be fair and just, unless all moral reasoning

is to be set at nought. It holds good even to ordinary men with all their imperfections and caprices. But, it is much stronger, when applied to one "who had no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." This reasoning will apply also to the parable of the Prodigal, and to many other of our Saviour's parables, which need not be minutely specified.

How incredible is the supposition, that *the mind* which delighted in such beautiful moral fictions, should have passed by multitudes of perishing Heathen. How incredible that such a Redeemer should have left the great majority of mankind to hopeless destruction! But to avoid this inconsistence, some Calvinists have extended the doctrine of Election even to Pagans. "Certum est Deum et *inter Gentiles* habuisse suos Electos!" *Bullinger, quoted by Laurence*, p. 319. Traces of the same relentings may be found in *Bishop Hall's Contemplations.*

SECTION LXV.

The many and the few Stripes.

" The servant which knew his master's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not and *did commit things worthy of stripes* shall be beaten with few stripes." *Luke* xii. 48.

These expressions, when fairly interpreted, afford great credibility to our general conclusion; but the gloss which Doddridge puts on them is extremely harsh. " He who, *like the Heathen*, did not know the particulars of his duty by a clear revelation, and yet sinning against that degree of light he had, committed things which deserved stripes, shall be beaten indeed, but with fewer and lighter strokes than the other." Now, if by such interpretation, it is insinuated, that *all* the Heathen shall be punished, it is far more than the passage will prove. For then, it ought first to be shown, that *all* the Heathen " *have com-*

mitted things worthy of stripes," and that to such a degree, as to exclude them from the hope of pardon. But this is more than any one can show. It proceeds on the hypothesis, that the Heathen will be judged by the strict law of works, a law by which "no flesh can be justified." How different is the representation of St. Paul. "God hath concluded all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon *all.*" *Rom.* xi. 32.

But allowing the Heathen to be treated in the way and manner here prescribed, there is nothing more to apprehend concerning them, than concerning the generality of professing Christians. Taking into our view their respective difficulties and advantages, I am by no means certain that appearances are against them. There is, at least, quite as much to apprehend from the guilt of knowledge abused or neglected, as there is from the dangers of partial ignorance.

SECTION LXVI.

The grateful Samaritan.

It was the object of many of our Saviour's actions and discourses, to contrast the Gentiles with the Jews, by exhibiting the teachableness and humility of the former, in opposition to the pride and self-righteousness of the latter. Of this we have an illustrious example in the conduct of the ten lepers, *Luke* xvii. 12. of whom only one returned to give thanks, and he *was a Samaritan*. See Sect. 37. But the inference to be derived from such an occurrence, is a direct inference in favour of our argument; and though not assuming the aspect of a direct assertion, its meaning is too plain to be mistaken by any one. "There were not found who returned to give glory to God, save this *stranger*." ver. 18.

These observations apply, if possible, with still greater force to the parable of the good Samaritan, as contrasted with

Priest and Levite, *Luke* x. 30—37. I say with greater force, because the former was a *fact*, and therefore the occurrence might be deemed a matter of mere incident. But this was a moral fiction invented by our Lord for the very purpose of mortifying the pride of the Jews, and of encouraging the hopes of those who were not amongst the descendants of Abraham. Though the act was one of mere humanity, and though the charity bestowed was by no means large or splendid; yet, it is evidently dwelt on with great complacency by Jesus. Here then is a proof, that acts of *humanity* are accounted deeds of *piety* in the sight of God, and that in this view, the simplest acts of kindness amongst Heathen nations may become precious in his sight, who "judges not as man judgeth."

"Towards evening," says Park, when he was travelling in the interior of Africa, "as I was sitting upon the Betang, (a seat in the market place,) chewing straws; an old female slave passing by with a basket on her head, asked me if I had got my dinner. As I thought that she only laughed at me,

I gave her no answer; but my boy, who was sitting close by, answered for me, and told her, that the king's people had robbed me of all my money. On hearing this, the good old woman, with a look of unaffected benevolence, immediately took the basket from her head, and showing me that it contained some ground nuts, asked me if I could eat them; being answered in the affirmative, she presented me with a few handfulls, and walked away before I had time to thank her for this seasonable supply. This trifling circumstance gave me peculiar satisfaction. I reflected with pleasure on the conduct of this poor untutored slave, who, without examining my character or circumstances, listened implicitly to the dictates of her heart. Experience taught her that hunger was painful, and her own distresses made her commiserate those of others." vol. i. p. 104.

A still more beautiful picture of the tenderness and humanity which are sometimes associated with barbarism and savage life, is to be met with in the same volume. "I was obliged to sit all day without vie-

tuals in the shade of a tree, and the night threatened to be very uncomfortable, for the wind rose, and there was a great appearance of heavy rain, and the wild beasts are so very numerous in the neighbourhood, that I should have been under the necessity of climbing up the tree, and resting amongst the branches. About sunset, however, as I was preparing to pass the night in this manner, and had turned my horse loose that he might graze at liberty, a woman, returning from the labours of the field, stopped to observe me, and perceiving that I was weary and dejected, inquired into my situation, which I briefly explained to her; whereupon with looks of great compassion, she took up my saddle and bridle and told me to follow her. Having conducted me into her hut, she lighted up a lamp, spread a mat on the floor, and told me, that I might remain there for the night. Finding I was hungry, she said, she would procure me something to eat. She, accordingly, went out, and returned in a short time with a very fine fish, which she broiled on some rushes,

and gave me for supper, &c. Her family came round, and sang the following song: The air was sweet and plaintive, and the words literally translated were these, 'The winds roared, and the rain fell, the poor white man faint and weary, came and sat under our tree, he has no mother to bring him milk, no wife to grind his corn,'" &c. &c. vol. i. p. 299, 300. At another time, he says, "I had almost marked out the place where I was doomed, I thought, to perish, when this friendly negro (Karfa) stretched out his hospitable hand for my relief," p. 386. On the hospitality of the Arabs to *travellers*, see *Harmar's Observations*, vol. ii. p. 222.

Such are some of the "*splendida peccata*" of Augustine, and such are the victims which are devoted even by Bishop Beveridge "to the devil and his angels."

SECTION LXVII.

The Pharisee and the Publican.

HERE again, we have a striking example that it was the pleasure and delight of Jesus to mortify the pride and self-righteousness of the Jews, and to encourage the humility and diffidence of the Gentiles. He delivers a parable in which a Pharisee and a publican are contrasted with each other. The one possesses every external advantage, he is exact and regular in all the ceremonials of religion; the other is by no means so correct and rigid, but he feels and laments his numerous failings. His prayer was so short and simple, that it might be offered by the most untutored savage. "God be merciful to me a sinner."

If we call to mind the time and circumstances in which this parable was spoken, it seems scarcely possible to doubt, that by the publican was meant to be understood all

penitent sinners amongst Gentile nations. As such, it bears a very important reference to our argument, and the moral which Jesus deduces from it is amply sufficient to comprehend all mankind; "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." ix. 14.

And here, also, it may be noticed, that amongst the many severe woes which Jesus denounced on the Pharisees, there is one which relates to the present argument. "Woe unto you, Scribes, Pharisees, Hypocrites; for ye compass sea and land to make one Proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves." *Matt.* xxiii. 15. Here it is plain, that our Saviour represents the Heathen, when proselyted by the Pharisees, as becoming worse than they were in their Pagan condition; but if they had not been capable of salvation in that condition, such an argument could never have been used. He does not say, "ye make him two-fold more the child of hell, than he was *before*;" no, but

that ye make him worse than *yourselves*. Hence, we infer, that the unproselyted Gentiles were not treated or considered by Christ as in a state of necessary perdition.

Before we presume to entertain any harsh suspicions concerning the consequences of Heathen ignorance, let it be considered, that the whole drift of our Saviour's Discourses leads us rather to dread the penalties of perverted knowledge. As it is easier to be faithful in a little, than to be faithful in much; so it is probable, that at the final result, the laws of equity will obtain in all their amplitude—"There are last who shall be first, and first who shall be last."

Note. See *Jortin's* excellent Discourse on this subject. *Serm.* xvi. Vol. 2. "Their law which separated them, (the Pharisees) from other people, and the peculiar favours which they had received from God, produced in them unsuitable effects—a natural pride, a high conceit of themselves, a contempt and a bad opinion of others." p. 325.

SECTION LXVIII.

"*If ye were blind, ye would have had no sin.*"—JOHN ix. 41.

SUCH was the admission of Jesus, when the Pharisees exclaimed, "Are we blind also?" No, he rejoins, "if ye were blind, ye would have had no sin; but now, ye say, we see; therefore your sin remaineth." There is a similar passage in St. John. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness *rather* than light, because their deeds were evil," iii. 19.

From such passages (and several might be cited), the inference is clear and incontrovertible, that we are made answerable only for that degree of light and knowledge which we possess; and consequently, the sins of involuntary ignorance are blotted out by redeeming mercy.

The comprehensive inference which hence arises in favour of Heathen nations, stretches beyond the grasp of our minds. "Who can tell how oft he offendeth? O cleanse thou me from my *secret* faults!"

But if this prayer may be offered for the partial ignorance of Christians, how much more largely does it apply to those ages of Heathen ignorance "which God hath winked at?"

Perhaps the noblest view which can be taken of the Divine mercy, is to consider its exercise over the boundless realms of Heathen ignorance. Recal the generations before the Flood; review the trackless wilds of savage barbarism,—then remember, that as the world was created, so it will be judged by the Founder of Christianity—and say—if the mercy of God be over all His works—whether the noblest and most eminent display of redeeming love may not be shown towards those who have never heard the tidings of the Gospel. "I believe, and *firmly*," says a living traveller, "that mercy will be extended hereafter to millions in that name, which they never heard on earth, and that the awe-struck *Christian* may see the *slave*, whom he has scorned in this world, enlightened, saved, and glorified in that which is to come. *Scenes and Impressions in Egypt*, &c. p. 126.

SECTION LXIX.

The Widow's Mite.

The exclamation of Jesus, on beholding a poor widow casting her mite into the treasury, is replete with evidence for our general argument, as it relates to the acceptance of every one according to his ability. Believing, as we must, that Jesus was not liable to caprice or whim, that he was not subject to the imperfections of passion or pity, this occurrence, apparently accidental, becomes a standing memorial of his mind and judgment.

It is in vain to object that such anecdotes of our Saviour's life have no relation to the point for which we are contending; for, if we "have an high priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," we must be permitted to reason from such facts to the general doctrines of our religion. He who promised that even "a cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple, should not lose its reward," can-

not disregard even those acts of hospitality we read of amongst Heathen nations. "The Indians," as we are told, "go sometimes a great way to fetch water, which, having boiled, that it may not hurt the heated traveller, they stand from morning till night in some public road, where there is neither pit nor rivulet, to offer it to any passenger." *Customs of the East Indians and Jews*, p. 59.

Note. In the Account of the earliest Danish Mission to the East Indies, we have some striking admissions of Pagan virtues. "They (the Hottentots) make us Christians ashamed in many particulars. They are very kind one to another, and so communicative in their love, that if one has something which is good, he shareth it amongst all the rest. They are very faithful in things committed to their care, and never pilfer the least farthing from the Christians, though they should see great store of money about them. They are not seized with the plagues of ambition, covetousness, &c. like our Christians in Europe. Every one is solicitous for the present day only," &c. p. 12. See the Account published by *the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.* Lond. 1718. "Heathens and Mahometans are kind enough to us, and love to be in our company; but those that *pretend* to be Christians, and *are worse than Heathens at the bottom*, have shown us all the spite and malice they could," &c. p. 73.

SECTION LXX.

The Talents.—MATT. XXV. 14, 30

"THERE is no situation," as Paley observes, "in which a rational being is placed, from that of the best instructed Christian to the rudest barbarian, which affords not room for moral agency. Savages appear to us all alike, but it is owing to the distance at which we view savage life." *Natural Theology*, p. 528.

This beautiful parable in which the Talents are distributed, "to one, five, to another, two, and to another, one, to every man according to his ability," is constructed on the reality of this observation, and is thus commented on by an ingenious writer. "If the Heathen, whom we suppose to be the person that has but one talent, makes proficiency equal to that of the Christian who is intrusted with five talents, he must, at the least estimate, be entitled to the same reward. But, I should rather think, he must

attain a much higher reward; because, his advantages are less, and his obstructions and difficulties are far greater," &c. *Foster's Sermons,* vol. iii. p. 18.

Note. It is astonishing how closely the Heathens, in many respects, have approached the moral injunctions of Christ and his Apostles: Mihi nihil unquam legisse videor apud Ethnicos, quod aptius quadret in hominem verè Christianum, quam quod Socrates, paulo post bibiturus cicutam dixit Critoni: *An opera,* inquit, *nostra sit probaturus Deus, nescio: certe sedulo conati sumus, ut illi placeremus. Est mihi tamen bona spes, quod ille conatus nostros sit boni consulturus.* Vir ille sic diffidit factis suis, ut tamen ob animi propensam voluntatem obtemperandi voluntati divinæ, bonam spem conceperit, fore, ut Deus pro sua bonitate, boni consulturus esset, quod studuisset bene vivere." *Erasmi Conviv. Religios. Edit. Var.* p. 149. For many similar passages, see the Notes and Appendix to the *Connection of Natural and Revealed Theology.*

SECTION LXXI.

Christ the Judge of all.

"WHEN the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered *all* nations," &c. *Matt.* xxv. 31—46.

This single passage is sufficient to evince the universality of the Christian Dispensation; that it extends from the beginning to the end of the world, and that it comprehends the whole human race. If Christ had not been the Creator and Redeemer of all, he could not be the Judge of all; because, then, he could have borne no universal relation to the human race. But when it is considered that the great majority who shall stand around his judgment-seat, will not be Jews nor Christians, but *the Gentiles who have never heard his name;* it shows his relation towards them

in such a point of view, as none can gainsay or resist *.

The manner in which some are represented as saying, "when saw we thee an hungred," &c. is strongly illustrative of our argument, that many shall reap the benefits of Christ's passion, who have not been made acquainted with the name of their Redeemer. It strongly intimates, that the knowledge of the best and highest motives is not absolutely indispensable, even to the highest rewards. The meritorious righteousness of the Messiah, is sufficient to cover every sin of Heathen ignorance and infirmity.

* "It seems reasonable to think, that he who created the world should judge the same. 'All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made;' and no person therefore so proper to judge of his own creation." *Bishop Newton*, vol. vi. Dissertat. vi. p. 306. "God hath provided and doth propose to all men the same encouragements for obedience, and the same punishments for transgression: He hath appointed one heaven for all pious and virtuous persons, of whatsoever nation, rank, or condition they are, and the same dismal punishments are threatened to all impenitent transgressors," &c. *Barrow*, p. 306.

SECTION LXXII.

"*Forgive them, they know not what they do.*"
Luke xxiii. 34.

Such was the merciful supplication which Jesus made upon the cross for his bitterest enemies. How far it availed for them, we do not presume to enquire; but as it evinces what were the sentiments and desires of Jesus to the last moment of his life, and that he deemed ignorance a plea and claim for mercy in the sight of God; as such, I say, it bears a most intimate connexion with our argument for the salvability of Heathen nations, through the death of Christ.

The casesof the Roman centurion and the repentant thief (both of whom were probably unproselyted Gentiles, and whose faith must have been very partial and imperfect) I shall leave, without comment, to the consideration of my reader.

Upon the general doctrine of Christ's sacrifice and atonement, it is needless to

observe how much its value and efficiency are exalted by this argument for the salvability of Heathen nations, and how inadequately any partial benefits can be imputed to him who exclaimed, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw *all* men unto me." *John* xii. 32.

"We have the pattern of our Lord himself praying for his murderers, which, as it demonstrated his charity towards them, so it argues that he was their Saviour; since, otherwise, he knew they could not be in any capacity for pardon. His praying for them implies the possibility of their receiving forgiveness," &c. *Barrow*, p. 318. "Why God's merciful intentions were not explicitly declared to Socrates and Epictetus, as they were to Judas and Simon Magus, is another question; it suffices to say, that the overture of mercy made to such wretches, argues God's kind intentions towards *all* men," &c. p. 322.

SECTION LXXIII.

The Baptismal Command.
Matt. xxviii. 18. 9.

It should ever be recollected, that all the examples of faith in Christ, which took place during his life, were previous to the institution of the Christian Church or its sacraments; a remark, which is intended not to lower the value of these sacred ordinances to those who have the means of enjoying them, but merely to intimate, that they cannot be of such indispensable necessity, as to cut off the Heathen from their interest in Christ, because they are not admitted to the sacraments of the Church. "They are *generally*," but only *generally*, "necessary to salvation." The baptismal command was to go and *disciple* all nations; and, therefore, it can have no possible relation but to those who are brought into connexion with the Christian Church. "He who believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he who be-

lieveth not, shall be damned." Now, the Heathen, as we have already observed, can be reckoned neither amongst the believers nor unbelievers of Christianity; and the terms of the baptismal command cannot possibly be made to include them within its promise, if received, or its threatening, if rejected and despised *.

I deem it necssary to make these observations, because some great and good men, in their statement of the privileges of the Christian Church, have represented them as so necessary and essential to all, that their sentiments, if admitted, would close the gates of mercy and salvation upon all Heathen nations.

Baptism is a divine and sacred ordinance for the admission of converts to a membership with the Christian Church, and to a participation of the privileges thereto be-

* Hoc enim "qui non crediderit condemnabitur," nullatenus est *absolute* intelligendum, sed de his qui, audito evangelio, credere noluerunt. Unde infantes, et qui non audierunt evangelium, hâc lege non tenentur. *Zuinglii Opera*, vol. ii. p. 118. cited by *Laurence, Bamp. Lect.* p. 278, 279.

longing. These are doubtless many and great, when viewed as obligations to lead a godly and Christian life. But amongst these, I cannot allow that we have the privilege of an exclusive Redemption. "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world."

Nor let it be thought, that the duty to go and "convert all nations," is diminished by the view which we have here taken. It is a *divine* command, and it ought to be obeyed, so far as it is practicable. But the very obstacles which have interfered to prevent its universal accomplishment, show it cannot be of that nature, on which the salvability of the Heathen world is made to depend. Two thousand years have nearly passed away since it was given; and, at this moment, the number of Christians, as compared to those who are unbaptized, is little more than one to five; or as 175,500,000 to 624,500,000, taking the whole population of the world to be eight hundred millions.

But whilst we are anxious to vindicate

the doctrine of Christ's Redemption, as it regards those who have not heard his name; let it not be thought, that we feel indifferent to the many and great advantages which belong to those who are admitted by baptism into the Christian Church. Nor can this argument for the Heathen, perhaps, be placed in a more interesting or important attitude, than by viewing it in relation to some late controversies concerning baptismal regeneration.

It is contended by all who are not Calvinists, that by admitting children to Christian baptism, they are admitted to the benefits of the Christian Church, and that this extends, without exception, to *all who are baptised.* The Calvinist, upon the contrary, confines it to those who shall be finally saved. The question is, then, what is that peculiar benefit which is conferred on us by baptism?

To me, it appears to be that very capability of salvation which extends to all mankind, but which is here *professedly* and *formally* conferred on the baptised infant. Whether the infant be baptised

or not, can make no difference with regard to his capability of salvation; but the fulfilment or neglect of a divine command, may be very important to those who should bring him to be baptized.

To make the salvation of the infant dependent on his baptism is clearly to go back to the Romish doctrine of the "opus operatum." Nor can the words of Christ be made applicable to this purpose; for there it is said, "He who *believeth*, and is baptized," &c.; whereas there can be no actual faith or belief in an infant; and if the faith be *imputed*, it can be imputed to Heathen infants as well as to others.

I confine the question entirely to infants, because I would limit my remarks solely to that salvability which I contend is the peculiar grace of baptism, as being therein authoritatively conferred, and of which it is the seal and warranty. Nor can any infant, who dies in his infancy, want more than this to render him "an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." But, if the baptized infant survive, he becomes entitled by his baptism to all the other privileges and advantages of the

Christian Church. What these subsequent privileges and advantages are, I shall not enquire, because it is my sole object to show, that baptism conveys that *authoritatively* and *formally* to the member of the Church, which the death of Christ has effected universally, and without exception, for all mankind.

The only remaining question to be considered is this: whether all men are born into the world under the curse of the law, or in a state of grace. If under the former condition, then all unbaptized infants must perish. But this is incredible, nor is it founded on scriptural authority; "for *Christ* removed the curse, being made a curse for us." When our Church, therefore, affirms, that by baptism we are no longer the children of wrath, but are *thereby* made the children of grace, she means, that this is done *formally* and *authoritatively* by obeying Christ's command, and that it is the only legitimate *way* and *manner* of conveying this change to those who are introduced to the Christian Church.

If this be not admitted, the doctrine of

Universal Redemption is at an end; because it makes that Redemption dependent, not on Christ's atonement for the sins of the world, but on the performance of the baptismal command. "Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; he who believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; he who believeth not, shall be damned." The Calvinist must enjoy a decided superiority over us, unless we believe in the universal salvability of mankind, whether baptized or not; because this command has never yet been fully executed, nor can it be at this time to the majority of the human race. But, upon the principles advanced in this work, this superiority is altogether at an end; because the *dispensation* has been universal, though the *revelation* has been partial; and, as under the Old Testament, "when the Gentiles who had not the law, did by nature the things contained in the law," "their uncircumcision was counted for circumcision;" so even now, I doubt not, the same imputation is made towards the Heathen; their want of baptism is counted

for baptism. "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God." 1 *Cor.* vii. 19.

The doctrine of baptismal regeneration, as thus interpreted, extends to *all* the members of the Church; because all are by this sacrament *professedly* placed into a state of salvation, and are entered as members of Christ's visible Church. But, if the argument be adopted, so as to exclude all from salvation who are *not* baptized, then, as it appears to me, the Calvinistic interpretation is more credible, that the benefits are confined to those who shall be finally saved. Admit the doctrine of irrespective election and reprobation, as it regards ages and nations, and you cannot disprove it as relating to individuals. So important is it to place the foundation of our religion on the broadest basis of Universal Redemption.

Note. On this subject, see Archbishop Sharp's Sermons, vol. v. Disc. vii. Clarke's Sermons, vol. iv. Serm. 1, 2. Butler's Analogy, part ii. ch. i. sect. ii.

Summary of the foregoing Argument.

As the preceding facts and circumstances attending the life of Christ have been adduced for the purpose of shewing that his character and mission have a universal reference to the human race, and that though he is in a peculiar sense "the Saviour of those that believe," yet, that he is in a real and beneficial sense also, "the Saviour of the world," and as such, the Saviour of the unconverted Gentiles; I shall beg leave to generalize this argument, first, in its relation to the divinity, and secondly to the humanity of Christ.

The doctrine of Christ's divinity, it should be remembered, we have all along assumed as granted; and upon this assumption, I have argued, that, unless the effects of the redemption be extended over Heathen nations, this doctrine can never be satisfactorily proved, nor consistently maintained. There would be no more absurdity in limiting the mercy and goodness of God

as displayed in his creative and providential government, than in limiting the redemption of Christ to a part or portion of mankind; and until the principles of Christian theology are thus made to tally and correspond with the principles of reason and moral science, the divinity of Christ can never be consistently maintained by those, "who acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity," and who in the power of "the divine majesty worship the Unity."

To ascribe to *God* any thing partial or limited, or unjust, is regarded, and properly regarded as being almost akin to Atheism; but to make the same assertions with regard to *Christ*, is only Calvinism. Thus it is that we impose on ourselves and each other, by unmeaning and artificial distinctions; and yet we are surprised that the doctrine of Christ's divinity should meet with so many opponents.

But if Christ was "God manifest in the flesh," then I repeat, that nothing can be asserted of Christ's redemption, which is at variance with the acknowledged attributes of Deity; and that, if it be false

and incredible to assert, the Heathen are excluded from his *providential* care, it must be equally false and incredible to assert, that they are excluded from his *redeeming* love.

Such are the transcendental principles of this argument in relation to the doctrine of Christ's divinity; and I am content that all my reasoning respecting the salvability of the Heathen should be tried by the reality and validity of this test. The nature and extent of the Christian dispensation must be universal, or the doctrine of Christ's divinity must be given up. If "God was in Christ," he could do no less "than reconcile *the world* unto himself."

It is in accordance with this universality of the divine nature, that the character and offices of Christ, as "the one mediator between God and man," are always represented in Scripture. "That was the true light which lighteth every man who cometh into the world." "The world was made by him, and the world knew him not." "He is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world."

"I and the Father are one; he who hath seen me hath seen the Father." "Before Abraham was, I am." "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me." "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, then shall be gathered before him *all* nations." These are plain and incontestable proofs, of Christ's divinity, *because* they relate to the whole human race, and *because* they thus identify him with the Divine Being. But they lose all their force and energy, if you represent him only as a partial Saviour and Redeemer. He cannot be God, unless he act on universal and God-like principles.

But now turn to his humanity, and see whether it does not accord with these Godlike and universal principles, i. e. so far as what is human, can accord with what is divine.

Amongst all the actions of our Saviour's life, there is not one which betokens any thing like partiality or favouritism. He shows no national prejudices or prepossessions. Publicans and sinners, Samaritans and Canaanites, are as welcome to him as

the descendants of Abraham. And how kind is he towards those who had but a trifle! The widow's mite attracts his praise; the lost sheep dwells upon his tongue; the little child is embraced in his arms;—and are not these proofs of universal benevolence and of unlimited compassion?

Surely it will not be said, that all this is remote from the argument for the salvability of the Heathen. What? is the conduct and character of Christ, whether as God or man, remote from his character as a Saviour and Redeemer? How useless is it to speak of "that love which surpasses knowledge," if we confine it within limits which shock our understandings! How absurd to preach the doctrine of universal charity, if we believe that the greater part of mankind are excluded from the capability of Salvation!

Let us not deceive ourselves; neither infidelity nor fanaticism can ever be put down, so long as these narrow and exclusive sentiments prevail concerning the mission and character of Christ. That *God* should send his *Son* into the world,

not to redeem the whole world, but only a part of the world; this is so incredible, that if an angel were to bring the intelligence we ought not to receive him. But the angels, when they proclaimed the birth of Christ, proclaimed a very different Gospel,—"Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good-will towards men."

Nor is it only the professed Calvinist, who has thus limited what is universal, and localized what is infinite. Sorry I am to say, that many of the most zealous and able advocates of universal redemption as regards the members of the Church, are no better than Calvinists, as regards all who live and die in ignorance of the Christian revelation. But it is to these, I would respectfully submit, that such *ecclesiastical* Calvinism can never be maintained against the more *popular* Calvinism of the day; and that the dogmas of Augustine, Fulgentius, or Beveridge, are not half so plausible and inviting, as those of Gill and Bunyan, and Toplady. Let them review their first principles, not by comparing them with what the Fathers or Reformers may have

said concerning the redemption of Christ; but by collating their present conclusions with the fundamental doctrine of Christ's divinity; and if they find, that by confining his redemption to the salvation of Christians, they are advocating a system which is incompatible with the Deity of Christ, then I shall have gained my point as relative to the Heathen nations.

Let the Romish Church then continue to exclude all from salvation who are not within her pale; let Protestants be included in the list of her damnatory anathemas, and let her, in full consistence with such principles, assume, that it is her right to burn, persecute and destroy heretics of every kind and description. But let others be content with vindicating the just claims, privileges, and advantages of Christian believers, without impugning the salvability of those who have not the knowledge of Christ. We have the oracles of God committed to our care, and that is of itself a most inestimable privilege. We have a much larger share of the means of grace, and of the hopes of glory, and who can undervalue

such precious advantages? But let us not whilst contending with the Romanist, assert, that there is no salvation out of the Church; for this is in fact, giving up the life and soul of Protestantism. On whatever side we view this argument for the salvability of Heathen nations, we shall find it of the greatest importance to our own faith as Christian believers *.

But there is one consideration connected with the life of Christ, as recorded by the evangelists, which ought never to be forgotten. What then was the faith of those who were so favourably received by Christ, and on whom he performed his miracles? Did they believe in all the articles of the Christian faith as it is now made known to us? To assert this, would be to assert what no man can believe. It was not till the close of his life, that Jesus instituted either of the sacraments. Yet such as they

* Erasmus had some glimpse of this argument, as it relates to *Popery*, when he archly hinted, "Et fortasse latius se fundit Spiritus Christi, quam nos interpretamur; et multi sunt in consortio sanctorum, qui non sunt apud nos in catalogo." *Convivium Religiosum.*

were, they were accepted according to their means of knowledge. I leave the natural inference to be drawn as relating to those who are altogether ignorant of Christianity.

But, perhaps, the strength of the general argument for the salvability of Heathen nations cannot be more strongly exemplified, than from the consideration, that it has found its way into the minds even of some who were professed Calvinists. "If we suppose a Heathen," says Mr. Newton, "brought to a sense of his misery; to a conviction, that he cannot be happy without the favour of the great Lord of the world; to a feeling of guilt, and desire of mercy; and that, though he has no explicit knowledge of a Saviour, he directs the cry of his heart to the unknown Supreme, to have mercy upon him; who will prove that such views and desires can arise in the heart of a sinner without the energy of that Spirit which Jesus is exalted to bestow? Who will take upon him to prove that his blood is not of sufficient efficacy to redeem to God a sinner who is thus disposed, &c."

Newton's Messiah. Without approving exactly of this view of the case, which seems tinctured with the doctrine of personal election, it is impossible not to admire the candour and benevolence which could burst through the trammels of a system, and snatch at such a glorious inconsistency, rather than subscribe to the tremendous doctrine of an Augustine or Fulgentius. The beautiful lines of Cowper which I have prefixed to this work, are a still more illustrious proof of this assertion.

Let it be considered, then, whether the evidence from the life and character of Christ does not amount to an indirect demonstration of the point at issue. Is it not reducing the contrary supposition to what is morally impossible, and what is doctrinally absurd? If so,—Calvinism, as a species of Christianity, cannot be true, because it is founded on the subversion of the character of Christ.

PART THE FIFTH.

The Apostolic Writings.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

We have now arrived at the last and concluding portion of Scriptural evidence for the establishment of this argument, as respects the salvability of Heathen nations. And if we have succeeded, in the preceding steps, in rendering this point more credible and conclusive according to each progressive stage, it may be reasonably demanded, that its demonstration should be rendered full and complete by its union with the writings and doctrines of the apostles.

These expectations are reasonable, because the nature and extent of the Christian Dispensation are more clearly developed in the writings of the apostles, than in those of the prophets or evangelists. Still, it should be remembered, that, as a part of the *revelation*, it was solely designed

for the use of Christian believers; and that either in an historical or doctrinal account of the Gospel, it would be very unreasonable to demand any formal or professed statement of its beneficial effect on those who had never heard it. As a *revelation*, the promises and threatenings of Christianity are addressed and adapted to those to whom it is published. Hence are so many blessings distinctly promised to those who believe, and who act conformably to their belief. Hence, also, so many penalties are denounced upon those who wilfully reject its doctrines, or who hold its doctrines without bringing them to influence their lives and conduct. Hence, also, so many titles and distinctions are conferred on Christian believers, whose privileges and advantages are forcibly contrasted with those who have not the same opportunities for religious improvement. But it is only *incidentally* that we can look for the intimations of its universal benefits on others, because, such intimations could prove of no practical advantage to the *Heathen*, whilst they might interfere with the obli-

gation of *Christians* to spread and diffuse the revelation amongst them.

But, as in the life of Christ, the evidence for this inference arose out of the facts and actions which are recorded by the evangelists, and as it was necessarily to be deduced from the divine nature and the universal benevolence of Jesus, but particularly from his office as the Creator and the Judge of *all* men; so here, it may be expected, that the same inference should be involved in the doctrinal comments of the apostolic writings; and, though not professedly or distinctly brought forward, that it should be so identified with their arguments, as to form a component part of their assertions and conclusions.

Should it be objected, that I have taken notice of such passages only as appear to favour this argument, and have passed by all which relate exclusively to the members of the Christian Church, I beg leave once more to reply, that as it was, by no means, my object to diminish the value and importance of any privileges which belong *peculiarly* to Christians, so I cannot admit

that such passages, however strong or numerous, can, in any degree, oppose our conclusion, as relating to the salvability of the Heathen. When Christ is said "to be the Head of the Church," "to have purchased the Church with his own blood," "to have loved the Church, and given himself for it," &c.; far be it from me to attempt to degrade or depreciate the value and import of such titles and promises. But when I find, that, in other passages he is said "to have given himself a ransom for every man," to be "the Saviour of all men," "to be the propitiation, not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world," &c.; I cannot bring myself, by any rules of just reasoning, to sacrifice the universal to the particular. Let all the claims and privileges of Christian believers be fully and fairly acknowledged; but let us not view that Redemption as partial which is asserted to be universal. The covenant of God in Christ, I contend, was made for the redemption of the *world*; but of this covenant the Church is the appointed keeper and guardian. As such,

whilst she holds the general blessing on behalf of all mankind, she enjoys many valuable blessings and privileges of her own.

It is not to be denied, however, that there are a few passages which seem to favour the doctrine, that there is no salvation out of the Church. "Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles, that they may be saved." "The Lord added daily to the Church such as should be saved," &c. But, I would submit, that, unless a direct *Calvinistic* meaning be attached to *all* such passages, it ought not to be allowed to counteract the force of that large body of Scriptural evidence which we have adduced in favour of the salvability of Heathen nations. If any man thinks proper to prefer the Calvinistic interpretation of the Scriptures, as relates to those who have a knowledge of the revelation, he cannot certainly be blamed for extending the same interpretation to all who have been denied this knowledge. But, as this work is not addressed so much to professed Calvinists, as to those who hold the doctrine of Universal Redemption in relation to members of

the Church, I have not thought it necessary to enter upon any critical examination of such passages. They are few in number; and, I believe, I have cited the two which are most striking; and it is sufficient to observe, that they do not require half the ingenuity to explain them in their relation to the *Heathen*, which some other passages in the Epistle to the Romans require in their reference to the *members of the Church*.

Upon the whole, I again invite my reader to enter on this part of the evidence, without any bias or partiality for preconceived opinions. Let him meditate on each section, first, as an independent proof; and secondly, in its relation to the general argument. Whatever he admits, must be added to the accumulations of former evidence; whatever he rejects, cannot invalidate any thing that he still retains. Supposing, that out of all these sections, there be only one that is conclusive, my point is gained; the salvability of the Heathen nations, in connexion with the Christian Dispensation, must henceforth be regarded

as an established doctrine of Scriptural Theology. But how much this would simplify our controversies with Deists, with Calvinists, with Unitarians, and Romanists, I have already incidentally pointed out, and would now only advert to it, as affording a strong presumptive argument for its credibility. Even as an *hypothesis*, that must be deserving of examination, which offers to explain difficulties that have hitherto eluded solution; which admits the objections of unbelievers, and which neutralizes all their force; which places Christianity on the basis of nature, without compromising or disguising any one doctrine or mystery of grace; nay, which brings all the difficulties and obscurities of Providence to shed light and lustre on the Gospel Dispensation. "That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

SECTION LXXIV.

Through Ignorance ye did it.
Acts iii. 17.

THIS is a very important acknowledgment, when viewed in relation to our argument. After all the miracles which Jesus had performed in the midst of Jerusalem; after all the plain accomplishments of prophecy in his person; St. Peter is still willing to allow his countrymen the plea of ignorance. Though they "had denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto them; and though they had killed the Prince of life" (*Acts* iii. 14, 15.), yet the apostle hesitates not to offer this apology in mitigation of their guilt. "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers."

But if such apology could be offered on behalf of the Jews, how much stronger

does the ignorance of Heathen nations plead in mitigation of their errors; and if an inspired apostle could bring forward such a plea, how little does it become ecclesiastical synods and councils to anathematize all who may die beyond the pale of the Church!

And the same plea may be extended to *all* sins of ignorance, not only of Pagans, but of Jews and Mahometans, of heretics and schismatics. "Most firmly believe, and doubt not at all," says Fulgentius, "that all infants, whether they die in the womb, or die as soon as born, and leave the world before they are baptized, shall be punished with eternal fire." Such are the horrible principles which have been extended at large over Heathen nations, and which have been sometimes dignified with the name of *orthodoxy*. But, it should be clearly understood, that such are not the principles of Scripture. "I received mercy," says St. Paul, "*because* I did it ignorantly in unbelief." 1 *Tim.* i. 13. St. Peter here adduces the same apology for

his fellow-countrymen :—"I wot that ye did it ignorantly, as did also your rulers." And Jesus, with his dying breath, has canonized the same sentiment :—" Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

Let it be considered, then, that if the *total* ignorance of the Heathen may not be viewed as an apology for his want of Christian faith, that every plea for our *partial* ignorance must be given up, unless we resort to the principles of Calvinism. If the poor and ignorant of every Christian country are always spoken of as being on a different footing from those who have received the advantage of education, it is but following out the same premises, and the truth of our conclusion will appear in all its splendour.

SECTION LXXV.

Cornelius.

CORNELIUS "an uncircumcised, but pious Gentile" (*Doddridge*), was "a Roman centurion, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house; who gave much alms to the people, and feared God always." *Acts* x. 2. When it is considered, that this is the character of one who was neither a Jewish proselyte, nor a Christian convert, it is painful to reflect on the many harsh and indiscriminate reproaches which have been heaped on Heathen nations.

It was to this uncircumcised and unbaptized Gentile that God was pleased to send an angel. And he said, "thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God." ver. 4. I cannot conceive a more severe rebuke to those uncharitable sentiments, which would represent all Heathen virtues as of no worth in the sight of God.

"Of a truth, I perceive," says Peter,

"that God is no respecter of persons; but, in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." Here is the declaration of an apostle, that the acceptance of individuals is not made to depend upon Christian faith, when they have not the opportunity of hearing the Gospel; but that the fear of God, if accompanied with such good actions as their circumstances may admit, will commend them to the Divine mercy for the sake of Him who is the Saviour of the world.

"Cornelius was a stranger to the true religion; but, so far as he knew his duty, he was honest and sincere. He knew by the light of nature, that to pray to God, and to give alms, were probable means of gaining his favour, and therefore he took these methods. This God accepted, and because of his sincerity, he vouchsafed his special grace and assistance," &c. *Sharp's Sermons*, vol. vi. Serm. ii. See also *Bishop Sherlock's Sermons*, vol. i. Serm. xii. *but particularly Jortin*, vol. iii. Serm. xviii.

SECTION LXXVI.

"*Who in times past suffered all men to go on in their own ways.*"—Acts xiv. 16.

HERE is an acknowledgment that it was by the permission and providence of God the nations of the world had been hitherto left without the aid of a direct revelation. "Nevertheless," it is added, "he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave *us* rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling *our* hearts with joy and gladness."

This is a confirmation of the assertion we have already made, that the dispensations of providence and grace are not to be disunited from each other; and that the mercies which the Heathen receive in their temporal treatment, are designed and intended to promote their spiritual welfare. It is opposed to that horrible sentiment of Calvin and his followers, that all these creative mercies are given for *the purpose* of leaving them without excuse; and that

whilst " their hearts are filled with joy and gladness," they are only filling up the measure of their iniquities, and " heaping to themselves wrath against the day of wrath."

Such reasoning, if admitted, would indeed have left the Heathen *without excuse;* because it would have destroyed all their moral and religious obligations. But it should be observed, that the apostle includes *himself* in the argument " filling *our* hearts," &c. If he had thought, that the providential goodness of God was not designed and calculated to lead these Heathens to repentance, he would scarcely have identified Barnabas and himself with them. " We are men of like passions with you," &c.

SECTION LXXVII.

Salvation is of Grace.

"We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved even as they." *Acts* xv. 11. Such was the declaration of Peter concerning the only foundation on which the salvation of man can be laid; but instead of embracing the whole proposition, we are too apt to confine our attention to the expression — "*We believe.*" The truth is, that we are so accustomed to confound the *revelation* of the Gospel with its existence as a *dispensation*, that we are apt to substitute the faith of believers for the grace and mercy of God in Christ. But, if the grace and mercy of God exist independently of our knowledge or belief, then, the essential principle of salvation is applicable to the whole human race. The faith and knowledge of individuals must vary with the circumstances and conditions in which they are placed; but

the grace and mercy of God remain free and independent of all such accidents. It is "the same yesterday, to day, and for ever."

"The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men," *Titus* ii, 11. This passage, as Barrow observes, (vol. iii. p. 315.) might, perhaps, be more accurately translated, "The grace of God which *is saving of all men* hath appeared." But, in either way, it fortifies our argument for the salvability of the Heathen. It either refers to the *dispensation* of the Gospel apart from its *Revelation;* or it asserts of the Revelation itself, that, in its saving efficacy, it appertains to all mankind.

SECTION LXXVIII.

"*Neither is there salvation in any other.*"
Acts iv. 12.

Throughout the whole of this argument, we have been anxious to connect the salvability of Heathen nations with the sacrifice and death of Christ; because, we are persuaded, that unless it be built on this foundation, it cannot be satisfactorily established. "Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

And it is the more necessary this should be clearly understood, because many divines, who could not reconcile themselves to the belief of their universal condemnation, have yet scrupled to admit them to a participation in the covenant of grace. But, if excluded from this covenant, there can be no hope for them. "By the works of the law, no flesh can be justified."

If all men are born into the world in a

salvable condition, it must be solely in virtue of "that propitiation which hath been made for the sins of the whole world." Hence, it is, that we have so much insisted on the universal character of Christ, as the Maker, the Saviour, and the Judge of all men. To divorce the Heathen from the "only name given under heaven, whereby we may be saved," is to give them up to the horrible sentence of reprobation and perdition.

Uncovenanted mercies, are no mercies at all, because, "there is but one mediator between God and men," and every thing which has been done for man has been done through Jesus Christ. "This world was made by him and for him, and he is the head of all things and by him do all consist." But, as all men fell in the first Adam; so were all redeemed by the second Adam. Hence, the Heathen, as well as the members of the Church, shall stand around the judgment seat of Christ to receive of the things done in the body, whether they be good or evil. Hence are they even now the real, though, the unconscious subjects

of his mediatorial kingdom. "All things being now delivered into His hands, and the whole frame of government laid on His shoulders, and built on His Redemption, even on Christ, the head corner-stone—the very moral law is now *His* law, and its obligations are *His* obligations; yea, the very law of punishment is suspended and delivered up into the hands of the Redeemer; so that as God ruleth amongst the blindest of the Heathen, that know him not; so doth Christ rule amongst them, though they know not him." *Baxter's Universal Redemption*, p. 466. "The undertakings and performances of our Saviour did respect all men, as the common works of nature do; as the air we breathe in, or as the sun which shines on us," &c. *Barrow*, p. 347.

SECTION LXXIX.

St. Paul at Athens.

If the Apostle of the Gentiles had entertained those dark and gloomy sentiments respecting the cast away condition of Pagan nations, which we hear so frequently expressed by the zealous, but, as it appears to me, the injudicious advocates of missionary exertions; we might have naturally expected to hear them at large during his visit to Athens. *Acts* xvii. 16—34. But, though "his spirit was stirred within him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry;" yet, I cannot find, that any such harsh or violent sentiments came from his mouth. "I perceive," says he, "that, in all things ye are too superstitious," or too much addicted to the worship of demons or inferior deities, "for as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar to the unknown God; whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." ver. 22, 23. He then

proceeds to show, that all things were created by that one God, "who had made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth, and had determined the times appointed, and the bounds of their habitations." From the expressions of their own poets, he shews, that they were "the offspring of God;" and consequently, that they ought not to think he could resemble "any idols of silver or gold." He then concludes by observing, "the times of this ignorance God had winked at," but now commandeth men to repent; because he had appointed Christ to be the Judge of all men, and had given full attestation of this appointment, by his resurrection from the dead.

It is impossible to conceive of any address more mild or conciliating. If St. Paul had viewed all the former generation as necessarily devoted to destruction, he would never have characterized them by that gentle phrase, "the times of ignorance." Still less would he then have attributed these "times of ignorance" to the providence of God. When he asserts,

that God had appointed "the bounds of their habitations," he appears to allude to the dispersion of mankind after the flood; (see Sect. 10), and from the expression, that God "winked at" their past ignorance and errors, it is impossible not to deduce, that he conceived they had been treated with the utmost lenity and compassion.

But *now* "he commands all men every where to repent," a command, that is obligatory every where, so far as it is known; though when not known, "the times of ignorance" remain as before. If then, God winked at these times of ignorance, when he suffered all nations to go on in their own way; what can be more evident, than that he still winks at these times of ignorance, where he does *not* send the knowledge of the Gospel? So far as this argument relates to the Heathen, they are *now* precisely in the same condition they were, *before* the birth and incarnation of Christ.

SECTION LXXX.

St. Paul at Melite.

The greater part of the Gentiles with whom St. Paul conversed, were Greeks or Romans, and had arrived at a considerable state of civilization. But, on his voyage to Rome, he was shipwrecked on an island, where the inhabitants were comparatively savage and barbarous. Such, however, as they were, they showed to Paul and his companions no little kindness; for they "kindled a fire and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold." *Acts* xxviii. 2. 6.

The distinction and approbation with which an inspired apostle has recorded these acts of barbarous hospitality, should teach some harsh contemners of the Heathen to be rather more moderate and tender in their opinions concerning them. When it is considered, how large a portion of mankind have, in all ages lived and died in this state of savage barbarism, I look on

this passage of Scripture as an invaluable confirmation of my argument. Here, methinks, we may behold, "the cup of cold water," and its promised reward; the cup, not indeed given in the express name of a disciple, but which can be imputed and rewarded as such, in virtue of that sublime declaration. "Verily, I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, verily, I say, ye did it unto me."

Such acts of kindness and hospitality are probably the highest virtues which God expects from these poor barbarians; and when all tongues, kindreds and nations shall be gathered round the judgment-seat of Christ, perhaps one single act of this kind may be remembered and noticed by him, who is "the head of the Heathen," as well as the "head of the Church." "Thou hast been faithful in a very little, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

"These Heathen," says Bishop Newton, "did not, as some, even Christians perhaps, would have done, strip, plunder, and murder the persons who were shipwrecked on

their coast." *Works*, vol. v. p. 289. "The Heathen could see the reasonableness of such a practice by the light of nature. Humanity tempted them to that which is farther enforced on us by Christianity." p. 290. For several striking instances of Pagan hospitality, see *Parke's Travels in Africa*, and *Harmar's Observations*, vol. ii. p. 212. On the hospitality of the ancient Germans, see *Tacitus de Mor. Germ.* c. 21, and *Cæsar de Bell. Gall.* vi, c. 23.

In the History of Greenland, by David Crantz, we have a faithful, but rather severe estimate of the moral characters of the native Heathen in that inhospitable country, vol. i. book iii. ch. 4, 5. But the general impression which was left on the mind of this devoted missionary, may be collected from this striking confession—"They are more obedient to the little light of their understanding, than most men are to the knowledge they have from the clear light of the Gospel," p. 196.

SECTION LXXXI.

"*Who will render to every man according to his deeds.*"—Rom. ii. 6.

In the preceding chapter, the apostle had shown the want and necessity of a revelation from the immoral state of the Gentile world. We are not, however, to conclude that *all* the Gentiles were equally depraved. He was addressing the Romans, and the sins which he mentions were the vices rather of polished, than of barbarous nations. Certain it is, that he did not intend to brand all with the same degree of criminality, or he could not have thus expressed himself: "Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; But glory, honour and peace *to every man that worketh good,* to the Jew first, and also to the *Gentile;* for there is no respect of persons with God." ii. 9, 11.

He then proceeds to observe, that "as many as have sinned without law, shall

perish without law, and that "when the Gentiles, who have not the law, do, by nature, the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves." ver. 12, 15.

On this important passage, I beg leave to make a few observations. First, that it cannot be supposed the apostle represents the unconverted Gentiles, to have been living under a stricter law than the Jews, and consequently, that when he declares, "as many as have sinned without law, have perished without law," he means not to include all sins, ("for no man liveth, who sinneth not,") but those sins only which have been committed deliberately, and against the plain law of nature, "their conscience meanwhile bearing witness," &c. ver. 15.

Secondly, that he supposes *some* Gentiles to have partially lived up to this law, i. e. as far as would be mercifully required by God; "When the Gentiles who have not the law, *do* by nature," &c.

Thirdly, that he supposes the acceptance of such Gentiles to take place, not

on account of their exact fulfilment of the law, (" for by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified,") but, as they are virtually included in the Gospel dispensation. " In the day, when God shall judge the secrets of *men* by Jesus Christ according to my Gospel." ver. 16.

Taken collectively, then, I would submit that these passages of St. Paul, bear us out in the view which we have taken of the case and condition of the Heathen. They are *universally* salvable, i. e. in a condition in which they *may* be saved, in consequence of the covenant of God in Christ, but, as *individuals*, they will be judged according to their behaviour as compared with their means of knowledge. Whether punished or rewarded, they will be dealt with upon the same impartial principles as the members of the Christian Church, " for there is no respect of persons with God." See *Barrow's incomparable Discourse*, Serm. xxxviii. vol. iii.

SECTION LXXXII.

"*There is none righteous, no not one.*"
Rom. iii. 10.

The case of Heathens and of Christians, it is probable, differs far less from each other in the sight of Him, "who is no respecter of persons," than we are apt to imagine. "What then," asks the apostle, are we (Jews), better than they? (Gentiles) "In no wise," he replies, "for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are *all* under sin." ver. 3, 9.

Supposing Christianity to be true, we are all, without exception, sinners and defaulters against God; but in consequence of the redemption of the world, no man is born in a state of hopeless condemnation. We are all by nature equally guilty; but we are all by grace rendered alike salvable. We are all born sinners into the world, but sinners who *may* be saved, and who will not be condemned, merely on account of Adam's transgression.

As to the degree of sinfulness or imper-

fection, in which Heathens and Christians may differ by their conduct, it is a very complicated question, and such, as no man can equitably decide. If, on the one hand, we are shocked with the gross enormities of Pagan vices; let it be considered, how much smaller a degree of vice may be equally punishable in him who enjoys the light of the Gospel. "If ye had been blind, ye would have had *no* sin." Hence children and idiots are treated as being *perfectly* innocent; they are blind, and therefore they are accounted sinless.

Upon the whole, I apprehend, it may be safely asserted, that there is far less difference in the sight of Him "who judgeth not according to appearance," between the *moral* state of Christians and Heathens, than we are apt to imagine. He who knoweth the secrets of the heart, can alone weigh the merits and demerits of his creatures; but, in the balance of equity, these differences may perhaps be inconceivably small, for as there is a principle of gravity which pervades all matter, so is there a principle of compensation which pervades and equalises the moral world.

Since, then, it is mercy, the sublimest mercy, by which sinful man is, under any circumstances, rendered capable of salvation; since "none is righteous, no not one," and yet all are *pardonable* for the sake of Jesus Christ; let us not think, that we can exalt the merits of our Redeemer by confining these merits to the members of the Christian Church. "He is the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world," and, as such, the efficacy of his atonement extends to all the tongues and kindreds and nations who shall be assembled around his tribunal. Whether we be saved or lost, will depend as a matter of *fact* on our individual conduct; but as matter of *principle*, it must depend on that "propitiation which has been made not only for our sins, but for the sins of the whole world."

Being all in the same condition by nature, it is by Providence or by Grace that we can alone be made to differ; but, if such differences be irrespective, then you must allow the premises and conclusions of Calvinism.

SECTION LXXXIII.

"Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not of the Gentiles also?"—Rom. iii. 29.

HERE, it is evident, that St. Paul is using the term "Gentiles," not as confined to the *converted* Gentiles, but, in its general meaning, as comprehending all the nations of the earth, except the Jews. But if so, his argument, as it relates to the Law and the Gospel, will become very different from that which is commonly affixed to it; as if it had a reference solely to Jews and to Christians, instead of comprising the whole body of mankind.

That this interpretation is correct, must be plain, I think, from the extent of his conclusion:—"*All* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" "that *all the world* may become guilty before God."

Such is the argument, when taken in its whole extent, as regards the *Dispensation*; but it evidently also includes under it a more limited inference, as concerns the *Reve-*

lation: " to *declare, at this time,* his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." ver. 26.

So far as the *believer* is concerned, he is justified by *faith,* because he could not be a believer without faith. But whilst the Dispensation is founded upon the grace of God, the believer becomes partaker of this grace by faith; " therefore, it is *of* faith, that it might be *by* grace." *Rom.* iv. 16.

This reasoning, though addressed and applied to believers, has a clear relation to the whole Gentile world, both in its cause and its effect. It is founded on the premise, that *all* have sinned, and that none can be justified by the works of the law; that those who believe must, therefore, be justified by or through faith; that as Abraham's faith was reckoned to him for righteousness, so shall the faith of those who now believe. But what is the basis of this justification? Is it the merit of *our* faith? No; it is the merit of *Him* on whom we believe. The justification

of man, in the sight of God, arises from what *Christ* has done and suffered for man. *This relates to all.* But the *channel* of this justification, to those who have a knowledge of the Revelation, is necessarily their faith or belief on the promises of God in Christ. How easy it is to distinguish the knowledge or ignorance of man, from the eternal council and immutable purpose of God!

When the Danish Missionaries, at the beginning of the last century, went to India, they estimated the number of Christians, if compared to Pagans and Mahometans in that vast Peninsula, as one in two thousand: "If we divide the world into thirty parts," says Brerewood, "the Christians' part is as *five;* the Mahometans as *six;* and the Pagans as *nineteen.*" I leave the reader to make his own application of these *data* to the Apostle's reasoning.

SECTION LXXXIV.

"*Christ died for the Ungodly.*"
ROM. v. 6.

IT has not, perhaps, been sufficiently considered, that every argument which St. Paul employs against the Jew, to show, "that by the works of the law no flesh can be justified," and that our salvation must arise from the free mercy of God in Christ, applies to the salvability of Heathen nations, with almost the same force and propriety, as to those who hear the Gospel. "God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." If we regard merely the *motive*,—"God commendeth his love," &c. then it can apply only to Christian believers. But if we regard the *fact*, that "whilst we were sinners, Christ died for us," and "that Christ died for the ungodly,"—then, it relates to Pagans, as well as to ourselves.

Now, the *motive* is only connected with

our faith as Christians; but the *fact* is that whereon the edifice of the Gospel is reared. I submit, then, that if Christianity be grounded on the fact, it must relate to *all* mankind; and, therefore, that it must include the salvability of the Heathen.

"It is expedient," observes an eloquent dissenting divine, now living, "to distinguish between the fact and the doctrine of the atonement. The aspect of the atonement of Christ, considered as a transaction, is towards *God;* considered as a doctrine, towards *man.* Viewed in the former light, its operation is essential, unchangeable, eternal. 'He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.' Considered in the latter, its operation is moral, and, therefore, subject to all the varieties of human nature. The Cross, considered as the meritorious basis of acceptance, the only real satisfaction for sin, is the centre around which all the purposes of mercy to fallen man have continued to revolve. Fixed and determined in the council of God, it operated as the grand consideration in the Divine mind on which

salvation was awarded to penitent believers in the earliest ages, as it will continue to operate in the same manner to the latest boundaries of time. Hence, it is manifest, that this great transaction could admit of no substitute. But the discovery of it which constitutes the *doctrine* of the atonement, though highly important, is not of equal necessity." *Hall's Essential Difference of Christian Baptism from that of St. John*, p. 40. This eloquent passage is in exact unison with my general argument for the salvability of Heathen nations, and applies particularly to the reasoning of St. Paul. It gives me pleasure also to notice the liberal sentiments of another distinguished dissenter, " who disclaims all wish at insinuating the impossibility of the future happiness of virtuous Heathens." *Foster's Essays*, vol. i. p. 213. first edit.

Such are the opinions of the most eminent Nonconformists, and that the greatest of our Divines have embraced the same sentiments, may be seen by consulting the Appendix.

SECTION LXXXV.

Redemption co-extensive with the Fall.

THE whole of St. Paul's reasoning in *Rom.* v. 11—21. tends to prove that, "if through the offence of one (Adam), many be dead; much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, (which is by one man, Jesus Christ,) hath abounded unto many." ver. 15.

Now, this argument is founded on the principle, that, as the Fall and its effects were universal, so it was expedient that the remedy should be also universal. But, unless mankind be universally included in the redemption of Christ, so as to place them *all* in a salvable condition, this argument will not hold good.

Certain it is, that the Heathen have been universally affected by the Fall, both in their temporal and moral interests; certain, also, it is, that, in all ages, they have formed the great majority of the human race, whether contrasted with Jews or with Christians. If, then, we suppose the

Heathen to be excluded from all participation in Christ's redemption, it is clear, that the whole force and propriety of the apostle's reasoning will be destroyed. "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." ver. 18.

"It was the end of our Saviour's performances, that he might wipe off the guilt of sin from *all* mankind; that he might reverse the condemnation passed thereupon, and that he might remove the punishment due thereto; or, that absolving the first man's sin, he might take it away from the whole race." *Athanasius, quoted by Barrow*, p. 325.

SECTION LXXXVI.

Sins of Infirmity.

The inspired writers (particularly St. Paul, *Rom.* vii.) dwell on the many sins and infirmities which still remain in Christian believers, and how far short we all are of sinless perfection. If, then, "the law of the members," as opposed to "the law of the mind," does not prevent the Christian from hoping for pardon and mercy on his repentance; surely, it would be subversive of the scheme of redemption to suppose, that the infirmities of the unenlightened Heathen should be dealt with more harshly or severely.

The truth is, that by far the severest denunciations in Scripture are addressed to those who abuse or neglect their Christian advantages. Thus *Heb.* vi. 4—6. in which the apostle represents it "as *impossible* that those who were once enlightened, if *they* fall away, to renew them again unto repentance," &c.; and yet, we have

no hesitation in believing, that a sincere penitent, even under such aggravated circumstances, may obtain the forgiveness of his sins. But, if such be our hopes and expectations with regard to guilty Christians, who can think that the same long-suffering and compassion will not be shown, even to a greater extent, towards those who have sinned under less favourable circumstances, and who have implored pardon and mercy?

Let it be considered, then, whether in all our prayers and supplications, we do not virtually take for granted that principle of Divine compassion on which our reasoning, as regards the Heathen, must ultimately depend; and whether it would not subvert all our confidence in the promises of God, if we could *suppose* him severe and unrelenting towards the great majority of our fellow creatures?

SECTION LXXXVII.

The whole Creation groaning for Deliverance.

The expressions of St. Paul (*Rom.* viii. 18—22.) so clearly comprehend the whole habitable world, that the generality of commentators have interpreted them as relating to *all* mankind. "The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God," ver. 19. "We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together, even until now." ver. 22

"I want not to be convinced," says *Bp. Sherlock*, "that the present condition of mankind affords great arguments for pity and compassion, and, consequently, good grounds for hope from the mercy of God. Whoever views mankind in their present state, into which they came by no voluntary act of their own, but placed in it by Him who is their Maker, and will be their Judge, subject to ignorance and superstí-

tion by a kind of necessity of birth and education, &c. and consider the benignity of the divine nature and the love of God towards his creatures, will easily see that the condition of men plead strongly for mercy; and that nature, with unutterable groans, calls for help and deliverance, and that there is reason to expect that God will not be deaf to her cries." *Discourses on Prophecy*, p. 285.

When it is remembered, that all such reflections apply with peculiar force to Heathen nations, and that we have the confession of many of the more reflecting amongst them, that they *did* long for such help and assistance *, does it not seem probable, that the expressions of the apostle are to be taken in their utmost latitude, and if so, do they not imply that *all* the Heathen have been brought into a salvable condition through the mission of *Jesus Christ?*

* See *Connection of Natural and Revealed Theology*, passim.

SECTION LXXXVIII.

No Difference between Jew and Greek.

"THERE is no difference between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him; for whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." *Rom.* x. 12, 13.

If it be considered, that the expression "to call on the name of the Lord," is of the most wide and comprehensive import, and that it is the expression which is used in the Old Testament for the most primitive and simple worship ("Then began men to call on the name of the Lord." *Gen.* iv. 26.), does it not seem to include all who worship in sincerity and truth according to the respective conditions in which they are placed?

The apostle's argument, no doubt, applies more immediately to those who believe in Jehovah as he is manifested in Christ Jesus; but, the question is, whether the power and spirit of this declaration be not

sufficiently large to embrace *all* who call upon the Lord, so far as he had made himself known unto them? Such appears to me to be the real and natural import of this passage; nor does it appear that we are justified in confining its meaning exclusively to Christians or *converted* Gentiles; especially when we remember how small was the number of Christian converts compared to others, when St. Paul made this declaration.

Nor is it unimportant to remember, that the distinction of the moderate Calvinists respecting the death of Christ—"pro omnibus sufficientèr, pro electis efficacitèr"—will not avail to soften the condition of the Heathen; because their ignorance of the Gospel precludes them, on a Calvinistic construction, from *all the means* to participate in its benefits. They cannot *refuse*, because they have not *the offer*.

SECTION LXXXIX.

"*The Gifts and Calling of God are without Repentance.*"—Rom. xi. 29.

When the Apostle was arguing, that, though the Jews were cast off for their rejection of the Messias, as the peculiar people of God, yet that the promises made to their forefathers should still hold good, and that God is able and willing to graft them in again; he founds his reasoning on the principle, that "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." *See also Titus* i. 2, 3.

The same argument, I apprehend, holds equally good with reference to the salvability of all the nations of the earth. That, in the earliest ages of the world, I mean before the call and covenant of Abraham, all men were treated on the same universal principles, admits of no dispute, for it is recorded in the word of God. If then, this argument which is founded on the divine immutability, holds good to the

Jews, in relation to the promises made to Abraham as their parent; it holds equally good to all mankind, on account of that promise, which relates to the whole human race, and which was originally given to Adam, their common progenitor.

The Jews were cast off for their rejection of the Messiah; but the Heathen have been guilty of no such sin. To suppose them, therefore, cast off for their involuntary ignorance "of him of whom they have not heard," would be to desert and destroy the whole force of the apostle's argument.

But, it should always be remembered, that the Jews are cast off in their *national* character, *as the children of Abraham*, not in their *natural* condition, as *the sons of Adam*. As *Jews*, their privileges are in abeyance; as *men*, they are still universally salvable. If their salvation, as individuals, depend on their conversion to Christianity, it must depend on the *degree* of evidence which they gainsay and resist. But no such evidence is brought before the Heathen; ergo, &c.

SECTION XC.

"*Praise him all ye Gentiles.*" Rom. xv. 11.

We have formerly observed, (see Sect. 40, 41.) that the expression of David and the prophets respecting the blessings which the Gentiles should derive from the mission of Christ and the effects of the Gospel dispensation, are so unlimited and emphatic, that they seem with difficulty to be confined to that smaller portion of the Gentiles who have partaken of the Christian revelation. The same remark applies equally to many passages of the New Testament. Indeed the whole argument of the apostles, when he is reasoning about the reception of the Gentiles in the place of the Jews, seems to relate to all the Gentiles, and as such, he here applies the predictions in the psalms and the prophets to them universally, ver. 8—12.

"Now, I say, that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision to confirm the promises made unto the fathers, and,

that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy," &c. The natural meaning of such passages seems to comprehend all the Gentiles, so as to bring them within the dispensation of Christ; though it is not to be denied, that the *believing* Gentiles are more especially intended. "There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in him shall the Gentiles trust," ver. 13.

It is, indeed, very awful to consider, that, if we exclude the Heathen from all participation in the covenant of grace, we exclude the greater part of the world from all the benefits of prayer and praise. Upon the principles of Christianity, the God of *Nature* is but another term for the God of *Grace*. How then can we doubt, that "his kingdom ruleth over all?" "Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem?" "No! the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy, that it cannot hear." *Isa.* l. 2. lix. 1.

SECTION XCI.

"*Who maketh thee to differ from another.*"
1 Cor. iv. 7.

If those principles of impartial justice which are every where inculcated in the Bible were steadily applied to the argument for the salvability of Heathen nations, there could be very little room for any difference of opinion concerning it. But, whilst men, as Butler observes, allow the abstract truth, they refuse or forget to make the application *. They admit that God giveth more or less to the sons of men, and then they reason as if he could be harsh and austere, "reaping where he hath not sown, and gathering where he hath not strawed."

"Who maketh thee to differ from another?" Apply this question to the relative circumstances of Christians and Pagans, and then you can be at no loss in coming to the plain conclusion. Here, it is brought

* Analogy, part ii. ch. 6.

forward as a motive for humility; but the question is equally applicable to the purposes of our argument. Since it is *God*, who has determined the bounds of our habitation; since it is he who has placed one in the heart of Africa, and another in Great Britain; how can we hesitate to admit, that he has made provision for all according to their respective situations; and that, whether in a more or less propitious condition, we are all like the Israelites when collecting their manna, "He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little, had no lack?"

If any man can bring himself seriously to doubt, whether the laws of distributive justice will not regulate the divine government with regard to *religious* knowledge, he should equally doubt, whether the weak may not be punished for their want of strength, the sick for their want of health, &c. So plain is Christian theology when divested of scholastic subtilties.

SECTION XCII.

"Such as is not named amongst the Gentiles."

NOTWITHSTANDING the dark and gloomy shades in which the vices and idolatries of the Heathen are depicted in the New Testament, it is pleasing to reflect, that we have several examples of their virtues commemorated; and here we have the admission of St. Paul, that a crime had been perpetrated by a member of the church, which was seldom or never committed even amongst the *unconverted* Gentiles.

We adduce this passage, because it tends to illustrate our general argument; inasmuch as it shews, that the sense of moral obligation is not only existing, but in some degree, influential amongst the Heathen nations. To many, perhaps, it may even seem to intimate more; viz. that the morality of some Heathen is superior to that of some who assume the profession of Christianity; and that at the

great day of account, our Saviour's prediction may be verified to an extent which would exhibit this argument in all its compass, "there are last, who shall be first; and there are first who shall be last."

"As there was of old an Abimelech among the Philistines, a Melchisedeck amongst the Canaanites, a Jethro in Midian, a Job in Arabia, who, by complying with God's grace, did evidence the communication thereof in their several nations; so is it not unreasonable to suppose the like cause now, although we cannot by like attestation certify its particular effects. We may, however, discern very conspicuous footsteps of divine grace working in part and producing no despicable fruits of moral virtue, yea, even of piety and devotion, amongst Pagans, which we can hardly deny to have been the gifts of God, and the effects of divine grace." *Barrow*, p. 329.

SECTION XCIII.

All to be judged by Christ.

"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every man may receive the things done in his body, according to that which he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 *Cor.* v. 10.

It is on this, and similar texts of Scripture, that we confide our argument for the connexion of Christ with the Heathen world. To no other founder of a religion would that argument apply; but, if all men are to be tried by Christ, as their judge, then must all men bear to him some universal and essential relation.

That relation arises from his being the Creator and Redeemer of the world. It is because he is "the Saviour of all men," that he shall "be the Judge of all." But a universal judgment implies, also, the universal salvability of those who are to be judged: for, "since every man is hereafter to receive the things done in the body," &c.

it is, clear, that every man is now furnished with the means of working out his own salvation. A future state of reward and punishment, implies a present state of trial and discipline. See Bishop Pearson's excellent comment on this article of the Creed; in which, without professedly treating this subject, the whole force of his reasoning goes to establish our general conclusion, as regards the Heathen.

How little do we reflect, that whilst we are doubting or denying the relation of Christ to the Heathen world, we are furnishing the Deist or the Unitarian with his most plausible objections. It is on the universality of Christ's character that his divinity must be founded; and it is on the universality of the Christian *dispensation*, that the credibility of its revelation must be established. But if these foundations be cast down, how hopeless is it to build a fit superstructure!

SECTION XCIV.

The Love of Christ.

"THE love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then all were dead," &c. 2 *Cor.* v. 14.

The power and beauty of this reasoning would be altogether lost, if it could be shown, that the great majority of mankind were not included in its meaning. That the Heathen "are by nature dead in trespasses and sins," can require no proof; and that they suffered equally with ourselves, in the effects and consequences of the Fall, this even a Calvinist will acknowledge. But, if so, how can we do justice to the reasoning of the apostle, unless we admit, that the beneficial effects of Christ's death are co-extensive with the evils of the Fall?

"All things are of God," he continues, "who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself."

ver. 18, 19. How poor and unsatisfactory is every interpretation, which assigns to such expressions a limited and local meaning; and how much more natural, simple and sublime is it to give them a reference to the whole habitable world! "All things are of God, and Christ is of God," &c.

Here also the strength of this argument, as relates to the Heathen, depends on ascribing that universality to the love of Christ which is essential to his divine mission. No partial, national, nor individual attachment, can suit that love, which brought Christ into the world to save sinners. But as *sinners*, the Heathen require a Saviour as much as ourselves. Is the sin of *ignorance* alone excepted from the divine mercy?

SECTION XCV.

"*A Man is accepted according to that he hath.*"

It is the beauty of Scripture, that the most comprehensive principles are developed on the most incidental occasions, and that maxims which apply to the whole human race, should arise out of events which happened to the first believers.

Thus from a contribution collected by the Corinthians for the poor Christians of Judea, this great and fundamental truth is established, "If there first be a willing mind, it is accepted, according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." 2 *Cor.* viii. 12.

It is the nature of such a moral maxim to render itself applicable to all in whom there is the disposition here mentioned; and accordingly it is, on this sentiment, at once consonant to reason and sanctioned by revelation, that we can erect an argument for the pardon and acceptance of all virtu-

ous Heathens. "The willing mind" is all that is required from those who have not more to give, yet not for any virtue or merits of its own, but for the sake of Him, "who though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich," ver. 9.

"A single mite, offered by a poor widow, is a present fit for the King of Heaven; which, from the hand of a rich man, would hardly be a decent charity to a poor widow. And thus the case is in all instances to which the rule is applicable." *Bishop Sherlock, Discourse* vi. p. 108, vol. ii. "No man shall be judged by a law of which he had no knowledge; but every man shall stand or fall by the light that was given him: it being true of every moral action, what St. Paul has affirmed of almsgiving, 'It shall be accepted according to what a man hath,'" &c. p. 121.

SECTION XCVI.

"*That the Blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles.*"—Gal. iii. 14.

"THE Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen through faith, preached before unto Abraham, saying, 'In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed,'" ver. 8.

This declaration is so clear and explicit, that it is almost impossible not to apply it to the argument for the salvability of Heathen nations. The only difficulty is in the expression "through faith." But, it should be remembered, that the apostle was reasoning against those who thought to be justified by the works of "*the law.*" "No man is justified by the law in the sight of God, for the just shall live by faith," ver. 11.

But if it were the end and design of the Gospel, "that the blessing of Abraham should come upon the Gentiles," this end and design would have been defeated, if it

had been made dependent on *that* faith, which the majority of the Gentiles have not had the opportunity of attaining. We infer, then, that the word *faith* is here to be taken in a much larger acceptation; "Abraham believed in God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

"The terms *faith* and *Gospel* are here used," says Warburton, "as they often are in the apostolic writings, not in their specific, but generic sense, for *confidence in any one*, and *glad tidings in general*. For, it is plain, Abraham's faith here recommended, was not Christian faith in Jesus the Messias; but faith in God, who had promised to make his posterity as numerous as the stars of heaven, when as yet he had no offspring. In like manner St. Paul uses the word προευαγγελίζομαι, to *preach the Gospel beforehand;* not the tidings of the Messias, the Redeemer; but the *effects* of the Redemption wrought by Him, *a blessing on the whole race of mankind.*" *Div. Leg.* book vi. vol. v. p. 216.

SECTION XCVII.

"To Abraham and his Seed were the Promises made."—GAL. iii. 16.

THOUGH the reasoning of the apostle in this chapter was addresssed to the Jews, and was designed to show that they could be justified only by faith in Christ, not by the works of the law; yet it brings no inconsiderable force to our general argument for the salvability of the Heathen. He first shows, that the promise was made to Abraham and to Christ (not to the *Jewish Church*, as is commonly represented), and that as this promise had been given to Abraham whilst he was yet uncircumcised, and four hundred and thirty years previous to the Mosaic Dispensation, that it could not possibly be annulled or defeated by the law from Mount Sinai. He then adds this remarkable declaration:—If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law: but the Scripture hath

concluded *all* under sin; that the promise, by faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those that believe," ver. 21, 22.

Now, every man must perceive, that the conclusion of this argument is not so comprehensive as the premise on which it is built. The one comprehends *all*; and the other, only "those who believe."

But mark the caution of the expression. St. Paul does not say "that the promise" (absolutely), but "the promise, by faith of Jesus Christ;" from which I infer, that if he had stated the argument in its full extent, as comprehending the whole of the original blessing, he would have said, "that the promise by Jesus Christ, might be given to all the nations or families of the earth."

"Before faith came," he continues, "we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed; therefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, ver. 23, 24. Now, it should be considered, that the Heathen, to whom this faith or knowledge of Christ has not been revealed, are

still " shut up," or confined under the law of nature. But, as it would have been very rash and unscriptural to have condemned all those who lived under the Jewish law " before faith came," so, I apprehend, it is now equally rash and unscriptural to pronounce any such verdict on the unconverted Heathen.

" As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." These, he argues, are no longer in a state of pupilage, or under a schoolmaster; they are in a far more advanced and more favoured condition. But, as this superiority did not lead St. Paul to condemn those generations of the Jews which existed " before faith came," so neither should it now lead us to think harshly or severely of those who are " strangers to the covenant of promise."

SECTION XCVIII.

"*By Revelation he made known unto me the Mystery.*"—Ephes. iii. 3.

In this chapter we find full authority for the distinction between the *Revelation* of Christianity, and its existence as a *Dispensation*. In the latter sense, it is spoken of as "the mystery which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs," &c. (ver. 6.) "to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ," ver. 9.

Here, then, it is clearly asserted, that Christianity, as a *mystery*, has existed from the beginning of the world. It is also asserted, that an essential part of that mystery consisted in the interest of the Gentiles in the Gospel. But if this were a plan or purpose "which had been

hid in God from the beginning of the world, who created all things by Jesus Christ;" then its virtue and efficacy cannot depend on the time or place of its *revelation.* The circulation of the blood was, in the same sense, a *mystery,* till its discovery by Harvey; and it is still a mystery to the greater part of mankind; but its operations and effects extend to all, whether they know it or not. So, also, it is with regard to the saving influence of the Gospel; for the Heathen, notwithstanding their ignorance, were created, were redeemed, and shall hereafter be judged by Christ. See the same distinction alluded to, *Rom.* xvi. 25, 26. *Ephes.* iii. 9, 10. *Col.* i. 26, 27. 2 *Tim.* i. 9, 10. *Titus* i. 2, 3. 1 *Peter* i. 20.

SECTION XCIX.

"*All Things were created by Him and for Him.*"—Col. i. 17.

If these sublime ascriptions are to be applied to Christ, as constituting evidence of his proper divinity, I would beg my reader to reflect on their connexion with this argument for the salvability of Heathen nations; in other words, for the relation of Christ to the great majority of mankind in all ages of the world.

"It pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell; and having made peace by the blood of his cross, through him to reconcile all things unto himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven," ver. 19, 20.

And now, if it be considered, that, on the supposition the Heathen have derived no benefits from the redemption of Christ (and without a capability of salvation they can have derived none), then, he can have made only a partial reconciliation betwixt

God and man; supposing, I say, such to be the case, I submit, whether even these expressions can be taken as implying the full and proper divinity of Christ.

The force of all such passages consists in applying them to that extent which necessarily imports the attributes of Deity. But a partial, limited, and local reconciliation, does *not* import such attributes. I submit, then, that if we adhere to their received and orthodox interpretation, we must comprehend the Heathen within their compass and effects.

It should also be considered, that by ascribing the creation of the world unto *Christ*, we bring all the arguments of natural theology to bear on the doctrines of revealed religion; we bring the Christian covenant into contact with all mankind; for, by the act of creation, the dispensations of Providence and grace can form only different aspects of the same system.

SECTION C.

"*Christ came into the World to save Sinners.*"—1 Tim. i. 15.

THIS and every similar declaration of Scripture respecting the ends and purposes of Christ's incarnation must undergo a great eclipse, if we exclude the Heathen from the benefits of his mission. Whether we consider their number as sinners, or the multitude of their sins, it tends to rob the Redeemer of a great part of his glory, if we suppose that his death and sufferings have had no beneficial influence on this great mass of mankind.

When we are told, for instance, that "God is willing that *none* should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance;" and that Christ died "as the propitiation not for our sins only, but for the sins of the *whole world*," it would appear, that the bounds of Christendom had been far too limited for such infinite and transcendant powers. But, when it is remembered, that such

passages were written at a time, when Christianity was still in her cradle, and when "the sinners of the Gentiles" formed a far greater majority even than at present; I think, no man can doubt that the unconverted Heathen must have been included in the force of such general assertions. "Credo, equidem, Filium Dei passum et resuscitatum, sed hoc totum pro me, pro peccatis meis, de quo certus sum. Est enim pro totius mundi peccatis mortuus. Ac certissimum est, me esse partem aliquam mundi; ergo, certissimum est pro meis quoque peccatis mortuum esse." *Lutheri Oper.* vol. i. p. 386. cited by *Archbishop Laurence, Bamp. Lect.* p. 361. How closely does this logic associate the argument for the Heathen with all our hopes as Christian believers!

SECTION CI.

"*I obtained Mercy because I did it ignorantly.*"—1 Tim. i. 13.

When we consider the many and great advantages which St. Paul had enjoyed before his conversion to Christianity, by his knowledge of the ancient Scriptures; the plea and apology which he here makes use of, ought to be viewed as a strong confirmation of our argument with respect to Heathen nations. If, with all his knowledge and attainments, he obtained mercy *because* he had done it ignorantly and in unbelief, surely, the same plea may be urged, with still greater force, for the poor barbarians, who have never heard the Gospel. If one, who, under such circumstances, had been a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious, might still mention his sincerity in mitigation of his guilt, and if he might adduce it as the *cause* of his obtaining mercy, unless all the rules of moral reasoning are subverted, the same cause will

produce the same effect on those whose situation is still more dark and forlorn. Such is the attitude of all the Heathen nations, in relation to Him "who came into the world to save sinners;" of many of whose errors and vices this may be pleaded by individuals,—"I did it ignorantly, and in unbelief."

This is a consideration which throws some degree of lustre even on the gloom and darkness of Paganism; and which may avail, in some measure, to account for the partial influence of the Christian Revelation. The mercy of God must be co-extensive with the ignorance of man. Hence some crimes, which appear to us of the deepest dye, *may* be blotted out by Almighty goodness. "*Had they known it*," says the apostle, "they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." 1 *Cor.* ii. 8.

SECTION CII.

" Those that are without God judgeth."
1 Cor. v. 13.

The most usual term of distinction between the members of the Church and their unconverted neighbours during the apostolic age, appears to have been by the denomination of " those who are within," and " those who are without." " Walk in wisdom towards those that are without." 1 *Thess.* iv. 12. " Have a good report of those who are without." 1 *Tim.* iii. 7. This, to say the least of it, is a mild and gentle expression, and such as by no means leads us to infer their necessary perdition or reprobation.

But, in this chapter, St. Paul is speaking of disorderly persons *within* the Church, and over these, as an apostle, he claims ecclesiastical authority. But, he claims no such authority over " those who are without," leaving them for God to judge. The expression which he employs (κρίνει)

implies simple judgment, not condemnation; for then he would have used a much stronger word (κατακρίνει). I think no man can read this chapter, and not perceive that St. Paul by no means believed in the necessary condemnation of all who were unconverted to Christianity.

Note. It gives me great pleasure to record the similar tenderness with which the Moravian Missionaries speak of the Heathen who have been prevented from hearing the Gospel. In one of their recent "Periodical Accounts," there is a report of the formation of a new settlement in the southern coast of Greenland; and at their first meeting for public worship, the Missionary addressed them in this truly catholic and apostolic manner. "In the name of Jesus Christ, our God and Saviour, who loves all mankind unspeakably, and will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; teachers have come to you, across the great ocean, to proclaim unto you, who have been hitherto wandering like sheep without a shepherd, the way of salvation," &c. &c. No. cx. p. 427.

SECTION CIII.

"*Pray for all Men.*"—1 Tim. ii. 1.

"I EXHORT that supplications, prayers, intercession and giving of thanks be made for all men, &c. for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth," &c. "For there is one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." 1 *Tim.* ii. 1—6.

There is not a word in this passage which does not tend to our conclusion, nor is there an inference to be drawn from it which is not connected with our premises. *First*, unless all men be salvable, we can be under no obligation to pray for all, much less, to give thanks for all. *Secondly*, this could not then "be acceptable to God, our Saviour," because he would *not* "be willing that *all* should be saved." *Thirdly*, it could not be asserted, that the

one and only Mediator between God and men "had given himself a ransom for *all.*" But its peculiar evidence arises from the expression, "*to be testified in due time.*" The *ransom* was paid, when Christ died for the sins of the world; but the *testimony* of this ransom depends on the preaching and progress of the Gospel. How clearly does this expression point out the distinction which subsists between the *dispensation* of the Gospel, as the constitution *of* divine mercy; and the *revelation* of the Gospel, as communicated "at sundry times and divers manners," to the different nations of the earth.

This belief is "a ground and motive of charity. There arises thence a more considerable relation between all men; being all the objects of Christ's love and mercy, should endear men to one another. It rendereth every man valuable in our eyes, as dear and precious in God's sight. It is a wrong to exclude any; to confine and appropriate this great blessing; to engross and enclose a common; to restrain that by forging distinctions which is so unlimitedly expressed." *Barrow,* vol. iii. p. 347.

SECTION CIV.

"*The Saviour of all Men, especially of those who believe.*"—1 Tim. iv. 10.

WHETHER this assertion be interpreted with reference to the Father or to Christ, can make no difference as relative to this argument. Doddridge would insinuate that God is the *preserver* of all men, but the *Saviour* only of believers, a distinction which is clearly against the meaning of the apostle; because, if men were preserved in this life, only to be destroyed in another, their preservation instead of being a blessing, would be the greatest of all curses.

But this distinction is perfectly plain and intelligible, on the principles we have advocated. God is the Saviour of all men, because he has provided all with the means of salvation through the death and atonement of Christ, but he is the *especial* Saviour of believers, because he has made them acquainted with this salvation, and has enabled them to attain the greatest

proficiency by their knowledge of the revelation. He is the Saviour of all men, because the ransom has been paid for all; but he is the especial Saviour of believers, because he has communicated to them, and to them only, the knowledge of its value and importance.

"Christianity itself," as Paley observes, "is not only a blessing, but a trial. It is one of the diversified means by which the character is exercised; and they who require of Christianity, that the revelation of it should be universal, may possibly be found to require, that one species of trial should be adopted, if not to the exclusion of all others, at least to the narrowing of that variety, which the wisdom of the Deity has appointed to this part of his moral economy." *Nat. Theology*, p. 530.

It is no slight recommendation of our plea for the Heathen, that it not only neutralises the objections of unbelievers, but that it frequently converts them into illustrations of the wisdom and excellence of Christianity.

SECTION CV.

The Humanity of Christ.

"VERILY he took not on himself the nature of angels, but he took upon him the seed of Abraham." *Heb.* ii. 16, 17.

Every passage which affirms that "God was manifest in the flesh," and that Christ was in all things made like unto us, and that it became us to have such an high priest," &c. is a confirmation of this argument for the salvability and redemption of the Heathen. It is *the fact* of Christ's incarnation, not our ignorance or knowledge of that fact which constitutes the basis of Christianity. "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that, through death, he might destroy him who had the power of death," &c. "What is *man*, that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him," &c. "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels," (that is, *man*), "for

the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that he, by the grace of God, might taste of death for *every man*," ver. 9.

These are texts, which, whether we regard their literal meaning, or their general import, must embrace all who are partakers of flesh and blood. To exclude the majority of mankind, would be to nullify them altogether. If Jesus took upon himself the nature of the *Heathen*, as well as of others; then it is impossible to exclude them from the benefits of his incarnation, without destroying the whole propriety of the apostle's argument.

" If our Lord," says Barrow, " be the Saviour of all those to whom God's truth is declared, and his mercy offered; or, if he be the Saviour of all the members of the visible Church; particularly, if he be the Saviour of those, who, amongst these, by rejecting the overtures and means of Grace, or by disobedience abusing them, shall, in the event, fail of being saved,—then is he the Saviour of all men. But our Lord is the Saviour of those persons, and therefore, he is *the Saviour of all men*." Vol. iii. p. 321.

SECTION CVI.

The Divinity of Christ.

"We have an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens." *Heb.* viii. 1.

If the doctrine of Christ's humanity implies his universal relation to all men, as having taken their nature upon him; the doctrine of his divinity includes also the same unlimited and infinite consequences; and therefore it behoves those who advocate the divinity of Christ, to consider its connection with this plea for the salvability of the Heathen.

All partial, local, tutelary relations are subversive of the divinity of Christ. They agree with the character of Pagan deities, but they cannot become him, "by whom and for whom are all things." Suppose him to be a partial advocate, you destroy the divinity of his intercession. Suppose his redemption to be partial, you destroy the divinity of his atonement. If any man

were to affirm, that the *providence* of God was partial, we should at once see the folly of the assertion; but it seems to be exactly the same folly, to assert the same of *Christ's* redemption; allowing him to be of the same power, majesty, and substance with *the Father*.

This argument is thus stated, by Bishop Pearson, with his usual precision. "If God, *as God*, be the judge of all; then, whoever is God is judge of all men; and therefore, as we have proved, the Father, and the Son, and shall hereafter prove the Holy Ghost to be God; it will follow, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost shall judge the world; *because*, the Father Son and Holy Ghost in respect of the same divinity, have the same autocratorial power, dominion, and authority." *Article* vii. p. 448.

If "it was for us men and for our salvation," that Christ is represented as exercising his mediatorial functions; let us be cautious of limiting his redemption to any age or country; such limitations being utterly subversive of his divine attributes.

SECTION CVII.

Faith of various kinds.

In the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews, we have a long catalogue of those who died in faith, before the coming of Christ; and it is clear that the faith of these individuals must have differed very considerably from each other. Thus the faith of Rahab surely was not the same as that of Abraham; nor the faith of Jephtha, like that of Enoch. But that none of them possessed that faith which we now call faith in Christ or Christian faith, must be admitted by all who reflect on the times and circumstances in which they lived and acted.

"He who cometh unto God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." By placing this the most clear and simple of all kinds of faith at the beginning of his argument, it would seem the apostle intimated, that even such faith would be acceptable, when no higher could be attained;

nor does it seem probable, that Rahab, Gideon, Samson and some others he enumerates, were influenced by any other. But if so, the same faith is attainable, in some degree, by all mankind; and the vestiges of this faith are apparent in the history of all nations. Hence, we infer, that there is a principle of salvability existing even in the most ignorant and uninformed, and that such faith, though it be "like a grain of mustard seed," if sincere and practical, will be accepted by him "who quenches not the smoking flax, nor breaks the bruised reed."

"When St. Paul affirms," says Zuinglius, "that 'it is impossible to please God *without faith*,' he speaks of the unbelievers who have known the Gospel, and not put faith in it. I cannot believe that God will involve in the same condemnation him who shuts his eyes to the light, and him who unavoidably lives in darkness." *See Life of Zuingle, by Hess, translated by Aikin*, p. 283. Our interpretation is somewhat different, but it leads to the same conclusion.

SECTION CVIII.

"*Honour all Men.*"—1 Peter, ii. 17.

To fulfil this precept must be impracticable, if we believe, that the majority of the human race are excluded from the possibility of salvation. Human nature cannot be honourable, if it be not salvable. It is honourable, because Christ has partaken of our nature, having removed the curse from it. It is honourable, because "he is not ashamed to call us brethren." It is honourable, because "he has tasted death for every man." It is honourable, because "he was a ransom for all." It is honourable, because "he ever liveth to make intercession for us."

Deny these propositions, as they relate to the whole human race, and you subvert the duty of "honouring all men," and of "loving all men." There can be no obligations due to those who are excluded from the love and the mercy of God. Hence the horrible and malignant nature of Calvinism, which views the

greater part of mankind as being in the same hopeless condition, as the fallen spirits. Hence its misanthropic, exclusive, and self-righteous tendency. "Between us and you there is a great gulph fixed, so that they who would pass from hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from you." If such were the sentiments of Christians towards the majority of mankind, how were it possible for them "to love and to honour *all* men?"

The national prejudices of the Jews are thus finely sketched by Tacitus—apud suos, fides obstinata; misericordia in promptu; sed, adversus omnes alios, hostile odium. *Hist.* lib. v. c. 5. This is the reverse of Christian charity; yet, "some do so speak of glorifying God for his discriminating grace, as if grace, the narrower it were, the better it were. But is not selfishness and envy at the bottom? 'Is thine eye evil, because mine is good?'" *Barrow*, vol. iii. p. 345.

SECTION CIX.

The Intercession of Christ.

"IF *any man* sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." 1 *John* ii. 1, 2.

This declaration is so plain and positive, that no words could have more fully supported the conclusion which it has been the object of this work to evidence. It is also a strong confirmation of our assertion, that this object is most intimately connected with all those doctrines of orthodox Christianity which refer to the divinity of Christ, and to his office as an advocate, &c.

"If *any man* sin," it matters not, whether in a Pagan or Christian land, Jesus Christ is still his Saviour and intercessor. "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." He could not sit at the right hand of *God*, if his office were partial or provin-

cial. He sits there in virtue of his divine, and his human nature, but in both these natures, he is related equally to *all* men. As divine, he created; as human, he redeemed the world; and now in the union of his divinity and humanity, "he ever liveth to make intercession for us."—"Verily we do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of *the world.*" *John* v. 10.

In Paley's fine discourse on "the Agency of Jesus Christ since his Ascension," he argues, that the same character which Jesus manifested on earth, he still retains in his heavenly exaltation. If, then, it has been shown, that his incarnate benevolence was universal, it must still have a relation to all mankind. To suppose him interceding for his enemies on the cross, but forgetting them at the right-hand of God, would destroy all the unity of his character. But why should the Heathen, *as Heathen*, be represented as *the enemies of Christ?*

SECTION CX.

"*Thou hast redeemed us out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation.*"—Rev. v. 9.

Such is the confession which the beloved disciple supposes to be made before the Lamb, "when every creature which is in heaven and earth shall ascribe blessing, honour, and glory," &c. and "their number shall be a thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands," ib. 11.

But if the great majority of the human race in all ages have been cut off from the means of salvation, if the redeemed shall be that little company which Calvin and his followers assert, whence is this great multitude to come? How shall they be redeemed from all tribes, nations, &c. if to this variety of tongues and languages has been denied the possibility of salvation? In vain it is to speak of the *future* triumphs of the Gospel; thousands of nations have *already* ceased to exist. If it be the *Heathen* who have formed this amazing diver-

sity of tribes, tongues, and languages, when the Redeemer shall come "to reward every man according to his work," (Rev. xxii. 12.) will he not evince, that he has been the "head of the Heathen," as well as the "head of the Church?"

The representation which our Saviour makes of those who at the day of judgment shall wonderingly exclaim, "When saw we thee an hungred," &c. tends strongly to corroborate this inference. But I have done. If our conclusion be not already proved by Scriptural evidence, we must wait for this glorious assemblage to witness its reality.—"*Behold I come, and my reward is with me to give to every man according as his work shall be.*"—"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Summary of the Argument.

THE evidence which has been adduced from the apostolic writings for our general argument is multifarious and diversified, but, it is more especially founded on the *peculiar doctrines* of Christianity, and is so interwoven with their nature, that I do not see how it can be separated from them. Though it does not, perhaps, occur to many to read the Epistles, in any other way, than as they relate to professing Christians; yet, I would hope, that hereafter it will be no more doubted, that the general system of doctrine which they exhibit has a universal reference to the human race; than it is now doubted, that the principles of the Newtonian philosophy hold good to the world at large, whether believed in or not by the majority of mankind.

If, for example, it be "a truth worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;" it is a truth the worth and value of which cannot de-

pend on the degree in which it is known, any more, than if it be demonstrated, that every thing is subject to the law of gravitation, the influence of that law is left dependent on the degree in which its truth is known or acknowledged. The same observation holds good to all the ascertained doctrines of the Gospel, which are founded not on opinions, but on facts; not on theories or speculations, but on the transactions of God with his creatures.

The writings of St. Paul abound with these large and comprehensive views of the Christian dispensation. He speaks of it as "the purpose and counsel of God;" as that "by which and for which are all things." No doubt, he also speaks of that election which peculiarly belonged to the Jews of old, and which is now transferred to the members of the Church. But this does not prevent him from viewing Christ as "the Saviour of the world," and as having "given himself a ransom for every man."

The best and happiest attitude in which we can view this subject, is by connecting its universal importance with its practical

application to ourselves. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation?" a salvation, equal to the wants of all mankind, but made known only to the believers in Christ. Let us view our advantages, not as mere privileges, but as the most awful and powerful obligations to lead a Christian and a godly life; and, as far as lies in our power, to diffuse the knowledge of these obligations over Pagan nations. But still let us hold fast to the doctrine of Universal Redemption, by boldly and manfully proclaiming that Christ "is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world."

Such also is the doctrine of our Articles: "A sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men." Art. II. Per Christum—æterna vita *humano generi* est proposita. VII. "The Lamb who should take away the sins of *the world*." XV. "That perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for the sins of *the whole world*, both original and actual." XXXI.

A general Review of the foregoing Evidence, &c.

HAVING exhibited the Scriptural proofs and arguments for substantiating the conclusion, that the Heathen are rendered universally capable of salvation by the nature and extent of the Christian Dispensation, I shall now proceed to offer some remarks on the general effect of this evidence; and shall conclude, by pointing out the importance of this topic in its relation both to the doctrines and the evidences of the Christian revelation.

And, first, I think it must be admitted, that the general evidence, which has been here brought forward, is of very large and mutifarious amount; that it depends not on a few isolated facts or dubious deductions, but that it is founded on the history, associated with the doctrines, and identified with the nature of the entire Dispensation. It begins with the creation of man, and it ends with the universal judgment; it per-

vades the Patriarchal and the Mosaic economies; it is blended with the life and character of Christ, and is intervoven with all the duties and doctrines which are inculcated in the apostolic writings.

So various is this evidence, that it comprehends almost every species of proof; it is sometimes founded on facts, sometimes on plain and natural inferences; now it is contained in a universal maxim, and now it is deduced from a particular incident. And there is this peculiar advantage attending it, that it has the weight of cumulative testimony, together with the connexion and beauty of a chain of argument. It has the force of synthesis, and the accuracy of analysis. Here are numerous and diversified particulars, all conspiring to the same conclusion; but should any one of these particulars not be approved of, it may be omitted, without detriment to the remainder. Upon the whole, I think it must be acknowledged, that it would be difficult to mention any doctrine of Scripture for which a larger body of multifarious congruities could be produced.

Still, it is probable, that some may not deem it satisfactory; they may think it too minute, or too circumstantial. But this, I apprehend, will be found to arise not from any defect in the evidence, but from a defect in their power to examine its force and appreciate its value. The whole enquiry turns on this single question,—What is the character of that religious Dispensation which is contained in the Bible? Is it universal, or is it partial? Now, in determining this question, nothing ought to be deemed trifling or minute, which tends to lead us to a fair decision; just, as in a court of justice, when we are examining the reality of a fact, or the credibility of a witness, we listen to every circumstance which can tend to throw light on the examination.

But, perhaps, the chief objection will be made to arguing from inference; and yet, unless such argument be allowed, there can be nothing like moral reasoning on any subject. If, for example, it be not admitted, that the same disposition which prompted Christ to make his fine

observation on the widow's mite, would also prompt him to accept the kind and benevolent actions of a poor savage, I know not how we are to make any moral deductions. The truth is, that evidence of this kind grows and encreases in force the more closely we examine it. At first, it may appear light, and dubious, and inconsiderable; but when we sit down to trace it in all its ramifications and effects, we are soon persuaded that it is, like the law of God, "exceeding broad."

But, should any one doubt the force and accuracy of this reasoning, I would beg him to attempt to draw up a similar survey of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, upon *the contrary* assumption. Let him from a universal creation, a universal fall, and a universal judgment, argue to a particular and exclusive Redemption. Let him adduce the general declarations of God's mercy, and infer from them his indifference to the Heathen world; or let him deduce this consequence from the divinity of Christ, and from his tenderness and humanity towards his con-

temporaries. But why should I desire any one to make this attempt? Read "the history of Redemption," as drawn up by Jonathan Edwards; and then see, how he has contrived to evade all such particulars, that he might arrive at the monstrous and incredible conclusions of Calvinistic theology.

It is in direct opposition to this popular treatise, that I have drawn up these Scriptural evidences for the salvability of the Heathen. If I have been painfully attentive and minute, let it be considered, that I was anxious to establish this argument on grounds most firm and unassailable. At any rate, I have not blinked the question; nor, like the American divine, have I called in the Devil to explain the mystery and history of Providence and Grace. But, though minutely careful in laying the foundation, I trust that the superstructure is grand and sublime. I have not supposed the Deity to have delayed our Redemption for four thousand years after the creation of man. I have not represented God, as trying, by curious experi-

ments, how many millions of his creatures should be ruined by ignorance and darkness. No! "He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning." He has made provision for every man according to his wants, and he will try every man according to his ability. These are the foundations, and these the consequences of our argument; nor do I desire it should be tried by any other criterion, than by a severe comparison with this Calvinistic treatise.

How grand and sublime does the Gospel appear, when it is thus represented, as "the eternal and everlasting Gospel;" not as the offspring of time, but the counsel of eternity; not as a confined and corporate system, intended for a few select favourites, no, nor even for some privileged communities and nations; but as the plan and purpose for which the world was made, and as that which bears a reference and relation to every human being who has lived in the world. What have the accidents of time or place to do with

Him, "who was, and is, and is to come?" If "God created all things by Jesus Christ;" if "He is the head of all things," and if "by Him all things do consist;" how vain and futile is it to represent the Gospel as any thing less than the universal channel of reconciliation between heaven and earth; as the Alpha and Omega by which sages and savages, and sinners of every age and country, may find acceptance and pardon through Jesus Christ.

But, it was requisite to be still more exact in the foundation of this argument; because it is not merely against the Calvinist, but against many who are the professed advocates of Universal Redemption, that we are obliged to contend. The truth is, that the Scriptures have not been sufficiently examined with reference to this interesting question: and, therefore, it has been hastily concluded, that they have afforded us no sufficient evidence whereby to guide our decisions. Hence has arisen the distinction between "the covenanted and uncovenanted" mercies of God; the former of which have been supposed to

relate exclusively to the members of the Christian Church, and the latter to refer to the unconverted Gentiles.

But, with all deference to the many excellent and learned individuals who have sanctioned this distinction, I will venture to assert, that it has no authority whatever in Scripture. The mercies of God to fallen man are in Scripture always represented as coming to him through Jesus Christ. The covenant of Redemption was made with God in Christ for the redemption of the whole world; and not, as has been erroneously asserted, with any part or portion of the human race. It does not, therefore, depend on the knowledge or ignorance of individuals; but, is like God himself, "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

The mistake has arisen, I apprehend, in a great measure, from confounding the *seal* of the covenant, with the *covenant itself*. Baptism is the seal of that covenant, whereby we are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's Church; and, as such, it is obligatory on all who have the means

of receiving it. But the covenant of God in Christ for the redemption of the world, exists independently of any such superadded ordinance. It existed many ages before either circumcision or baptism was instituted; and it exists in those regions of the earth where neither of these ordinances have been ever introduced.

By baptism, we are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's Church; but, whether baptized or not, all, without exception, are salvable, in consequence of the atonement of Christ for the sins of the whole world. The privileges of being a member of the Christian Church are highly valuable; and they are such, as, when duly improved, may even tend to place us hereafter in the higher mansions of eternity; but, if an exclusive title to salvation be reckoned amongst these privileges, I beg leave, in the most decided manner, to disclaim my assent to the assertion.

When St. Paul was debating this question, as it related to circumcision; he supposes an objector to enquire, "what advantage, then, hath the Jew; or what profit

is there in circumcision?" He answers, "much every way:" *chiefly, that unto them were committed the oracles of God.* Now this, I apprehend, is precisely the case in which the members of the Christian Church at present stand in relation to the Heathen world. They have many and great comparative advantages; and the principal of these is, that they have the Bible in their hands, and the Gospel made known to them. But, as under the Jewish economy, the mercies of God in Christ were still available to the Gentile nations, so is it even now with regard to the Heathen world, as compared with the members of the Christian Church.

And here I would beg leave to observe, that if the doctrine of Universal Redemption, as it relates to all mankind, had been more fairly and fully brought forward at the era of the Reformation, it would probably have placed the question between Papists and Protestants in a far more striking point of view than it now is. So long as Protestants contend for an exclusive salvation for the members of the

Church, they do not appear to differ *essentially* from Romanists; at least, they meet their antagonists on much lower grounds than they might otherwise have taken. The Romish Church, however wide in its extent, has never borne any considerable proportion to the whole habitable world. The great point, then, for the Reformers to demonstrate was, that there *was* salvation out of that Church; because Christ had died for *all*. The Reformers, however, who were bred in Romish prejudices, took another route, but still confined the *covenanted* mercies to the members of the Church. By this concession, they afforded a plausible pretext to the Papists, that none could be members of the Church but those who were in the same communion with themselves; and, consequently, that no others could be saved.

But if, whilst all the just claims and privileges of the Church had been asserted *as regards her members*, yet this truly catholic and undeniable doctrine had been proclaimed, *that all men are born in a*

salvable condition; then the bigotry and intolerance of the Romanist had been at once demonstrated. Even now, I apprehend, this argument would not be without its just weight; because all must feel that the majority of the human race must be interested in the Redemption of Christ, if He be the *Saviour of the world*! But any Church which would confine a Universal Redemption to the redemption of its own members, is not catholic, but is exclusive; and those who believe in such a doctrine, are heretics in their relation to Christian dispensation, and schismatics, as regards the great majority of those for whom the Son of God came into the world.

"Quicquid uspiam mortalium nascitur salvum est per Christum." Such was the noble sentiment of Zuingle, who, alone of all the Reformers, appears to have held the truth and the whole truth on the subject of Universal Redemption, and on the doctrine of the sacraments. All the distinctions between "covenanted and uncovenanted" mercies, as relative to the salvation of infants, conduct us either to Popery or to

Calvinism; they are subversive of that great and fundamental doctrine of the Gospel, "that Christ is the Saviour of all men;" that He died "for the world," not only for believers; and, consequently, that the Church, whether Patriarchal, Jewish, or Christian, is the *trustee* to whom this promise has been granted on behalf of all mankind; and that whilst she holds the title-deeds, she holds them for the common benefit of the sons of Adam.

But here it is proper to state the limits of this argument. It leaves the importance of baptism quite unaltered in relation to the members of the Church. "He who believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; he who believeth not, shall be damned." This is a command which is obligatory, so far as the tidings of Christianity extend; though it cannot possibly be binding on those who have not the means of obeying it.

Such, then, is the excellence of this statement, that whilst it heightens the value of Christian ordinances and Christian privileges, by viewing them as calls and

obligations to superior holiness and piety, and by rendering us liable to far greater condemnation if we abuse or neglect them; yet, it divests our religion of all harshness and severity towards others; because it teaches us, that " Christ is the Saviour of all men, though especially of those who believe."

Let all our advantages, then, as members of the Christian Church, be duly prized, and gratefully acknowledged; let us be thankful, that we have the word of God in our hands, and the knowledge of Christ in our hearts; above all, let us strive to connect these advantages with a proportional improvement in faith and piety. But, let us not, whilst we profess to believe in the doctrine of Universal Redemption, deny it in reality; nor let us think, that we can encrease the magnitude and heighten the value of our own redemption, by separating ourselves from the great bulk and body of our fellow-creatures.

If the doctrines of Calvinism shall ever be rooted out of Christendom, it must be

by showing, that our religion, in its effect and design, is intended for the benefit and salvation of the world; and that the Gospel, as a scheme of Divine mercy, is co-extensive with all mankind. To confute Calvinism with effect, we must contrast it with the history of the Bible, by showing that the word of God is founded on the same basis as his works, and his providence. So long as we fight the battle, by contending about the opinions of the Fathers, or about the sentiments of English or foreign Reformers, it will always terminate in a mere affair of posts. So long as we contend only for the universality of Christ's Redemption, as relative to Christians, it will always look like an affair of partiality and self-love. But, let us go beyond the camp, and contend for the world at large, and for all mankind; and, then, we shall demonstrate, that the kingdom of the world is the mediatorial kingdom of our Lord and Saviour.

And the reason is obvious. So long as the Calvinist, either by a tacit or professed

compromise, can bring the advocates of Universal Redemption * to give up the majority of the human race in all ages to hopeless destruction; nay, so long as he can prevail on us to exclude them from the *covenanted* mercies of God in Christ; we must always come with many disadvantages to the question, as it relates to the members of the Christian Church. For if the Divine attributes can thus be silently or professedly compromised as they relate to all the Heathen nations, there can be no peculiar difficulty in making the same sacrifice, as regards many who are living within the sound of the Gospel. Nay, it would then seem as if they had every analogy in their favour; because, if such were God's general and antecedent dealings towards the rest of mankind, I know not how we could object to this course with relation to individuals amongst ourselves.

Let us, then, not only "strengthen our stakes, but also lengthen our cords." Let us read and study the promises of God,

* See *Gill's Body of Divinity*, book vi. chap. iii. iv.

as they refer to human nature, in all its varieties of light and shade, of savage barbarism, of Mahommedan superstition, and of Christian knowledge. Let us remember, that the same comparative differences must subsist amongst the individual members of the Christian Church, which exist, on a somewhat larger scale, amongst the various nations of the earth, as contrasted with Christian communities. These principles of equity and justice will enable us to become more than conquerors; but, so long as bigotry and prejudice mingle with our arguments, so long as we professedly hoist the banners of Universal Redemption, yet really fight only for the members of the Christian Church, the followers of Calvin, who stand compact together, like the Macedonian phalanx, will always be able to break into our ranks.

Nor, is this topic of less importance, as it relates to our controversies with Socinians. The Divinity of Christ is most intimately connected with the universality of his offices, as the Creator, the Redeemer, the Intercessor, and the Judge of

mankind. If we suppose Him to be like Moses, or one of the prophets, then, a partial and tutelary influence may suit his character and mission. But if He be "very God of very God," of the same power, substance, and dignity with the Father; then, we can impute to Him no such local or provincial relations. He must, then, be the "Redeemer of me and of all mankind." He is "the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world." He is "the one mediator between God and man;" and to exclude a single Pagan from his love, would be to sacrifice his Divinity, and to deny his Omnipotence.

If the Divinity of Christ be consistently advocated, it must be advocated on impartial and universal principles. It were impossible that Christ should die as an atonement for sin, and that he should not die "for the sins of the whole world." Here consists the power and the charm of the Cross. But, if you confine its influence to Christendom, this charm is lost. Jesus is, then, only the son of Joseph and Mary. He cannot be God, because, as God, he would have

acted in a God-like manner. Either he was willing, but not able, to save all mankind; or he was able, but not willing, so to do. On either supposition, he is no longer "God blessed for evermore."

Nor is it probable, that in our controversies with the Socinian, we shall ever obtain any great or decided superiority, whilst we confine the dispute to a question about a few texts and various readings. If the system of human redemption be such as we have stated; if it comprehends, without exception, all "the families of the earth;" if it embraces millions, and tens of millions, who have not heard its joyful sound; if mankind, of all ages and countries, are brought into contact and connexion with the author and finisher of our faith; then, we invest him with the attributes and character of Deity; and the office which he is called to sustain, will prove him to be "the Son of God." But, if Christ be merely the head of Christendom, how can we attribute to him the creation of the world, or its universal judgment? The foundation does not seem to

correspond to the superstructure. We proclaim Christ to be the Saviour of the world, but the majority of mankind, in all ages, seem to have no connexion with his mission; and those who doubt or deny the Divinity of Christ, thus obtain the appearance of a triumph from our inconsistencies.

These errors have resulted from measuring our religion by the bounds of the Revelation, instead of estimating it according to the compass of the Dispensation. As a *Revelation,* Christianity is but little older than Mahometanism, and even at the present moment, it scarcely reckons a greater number of converts. But, as a *Dispensation,* it comprehends times past, and present, and to come; all men owe to it their means of salvation, and acceptance with God. It is, then, on the infinity of the Dispensation, not on the limits of the Revelation, that our arguments should be founded for the Divinity of Christ; and until this truth be not only silently acknowledged, but openly proclaimed, I fear

that a great part of professing Christians will be divided between the two poles of Calvinism and Unitarianism.

But, it is, also, important to view this topic, in its relation to *unbelievers*, of whom there is a much larger number, even in this country, than many may suspect; and a still greater proportion existing on the continent of Europe. We are surprised and shocked at the growing infidelity of the present age; but, I apprehend, it may be traced, in a great measure, to the narrow and bigoted spirit which has so disguised and misrepresented the noble system of redemption. It might do well enough in the darkness of the middle ages, or with the terrors of the Inquisition, to preach up the doctrine, that all Pagans and heretics would be consigned over to the devil and his angels. It might suit the persecuting genius of the Romish church, to assert there was no salvation beyond her limits. But, with freedom of enquiry and with diffusion of knowledge, such damnatory creeds have lost their influence, and the consequence

is, that a large proportion of those, who are not professed Calvinists, have become secret or avowed unbelievers.

Let us consider how the case stands. A man of liberal mind travels abroad; he goes to India, and beholds millions of Mahometans or Hindoos; he goes to China, and dwells amongst the followers of Confucius; to Africa, and he sees nothing but Pagan superstition; or to the interior of America, and he finds the same superstitions somewhat diversified.—Can he return home, and believe in Christianity, as it is commonly preached and represented? If he do, he must commence a virtual Calvinist. But he takes another road, and becomes an unbeliever, and he argues thus: "I firmly believe in the existence and providence of God; wherever I have travelled, I have beheld marks of creative love, and providential goodness; I am satisfied, that God has not created millions of human beings without the means of salvation, and, I am convinced, that he never will punish a single individual for not believing in that religion of which he has never heard."

The natural effect of such speculations is the denial of Christianity; nor can it, I think, be questioned, that he has some apology for his conduct. No man is bound to believe, "that God *is* a respecter of persons;" no man is bound to believe, "that his mercy is *not* over all his works," &c. but these are the necessary inferences which must result from the present confined view of the benefits of Christ's redemption; and until these views are enlarged, I fear, the progress of unbelief will, in a great measure, keep pace with the progress of knowledge.

The two most popular and plausible arguments against the truth of the Gospel, arise out of the recent publication of Christianity, as a revealed religion; and from its limited progress and diffusion in the world. By our view of the Christian system, not only is infidelity robbed of these strong holds; but, we can take possession of them, as the outposts of the Christian camp. That religion which can provide for the wants of all men, whether barbarous or civilized; which has been

present, in its saving effects, to all ages, and which has, in its influence, pervaded all climates; that religion, which can provide for the unconscious infant at the breast, and which can visit the most untutored savage in his cabin; it is this alone which is adequate to the wants of the whole world, and therefore, it is this alone will satisfy or silence all the doubts of the unbeliever. In its influence and effect, it is like its divine Author,—"He is not far from any one of us, for in him we live and move and have our being."

The truth is, that Deism would not have any ground to stand on, if Christianity were preached and published, in its catholic and universal nature. Its extent and importance would then fill up the whole habitable world, and as all men shall hereafter stand around the judgment-seat of Christ; so would all now be absolving or neglecting their duties beneath his dominion. The world would thus be viewed as his mediatorial empire, and all would become subjects and servants of his mediatorial authority. The ignorance of the sa-

vage would no more affect the reality and extent of the Christian dispensation, than his ignorance of the principia of Newton affects the reality of those laws, "which connect a chicken roosting on its perch, with the spheres revolving in the firmament *." The grandeur and universality of the Gospel dispensation, would thus accompany the reign of Providence, amidst all its varieties; and as the traveller

> "with extensive view,
> Surveys mankind from China to Peru,"

he would have a key to unlock, and a clue to guide him, through all the labyrinths of nature; and, as he reflected on "the one God and the one Mediator between God and man," his "untravelled heart would still remain at home."

Such are the beneficent effects, which a more enlarged view of the Christian system would produce, not only on its followers, but on its opponents. Nor let any man surmise, that the unbeliever could hence

* Paley.

infer the unimportance of "modes of faith." Could the knowledge of that religion be deemed unimportant, whose effects extend over the whole globe? Besides, as every man is tried by the degree of light and knowledge which he possesses, the light and knowledge of the Gospel, to those who enjoy them, must constitute the chief elements of their trial. "If the light which is in them be darkness, how great is that darkness." It is the beauty of this argument, that no man who admits of the infinity and importance of Christianity, as regards all mankind, can overlook its infinity and importance, as relative to himself.

But it may be said, you are diminishing or subverting the motives for spreading the knowledge of Christianity in Heathen countries. To this objection, I have already partly replied, and here I would observe, that the truth or falsity of an argument is not to be determined by any accidental abuse which may attend it. But, the truth is, that the most shameful misrepresentations have gone forth on this subject. Instead of urging the obligation of

spreading the Gospel abroad, as part of the trial of *Christians;* it has been too frequently urged, as if the salvation of the *Heathen* depended on the issue. It is our own salvation which is at stake, if we neglect our duties; but it is certain, that others will not be allowed to suffer through our neglect. In this, as in any other case, "every man shall bear his own burthen," and though Calvinists may please to preach another doctrine, to use a common, but appropriate proverb; they are but *putting the saddle on the wrong horse.*

Let every motive, short of the eternal salvation of the Heathen, be urged to incite Christians to obey the command of their divine Master; let the full benefits of this knowledge be dwelt upon, as regards the moral and spiritual state of the unconverted nations; let our own love and obligations to Christ be inculcated as the constraining motives for diffusing the glad tidings of the Gospel; but let us not by an overheated and misdirected zeal, do injury to that very cause which we are so

anxious to advocate. Let us not sow the seeds of infidelity at home, whilst we are endeavouring to reap a distant harvest; nor undermine the foundations of Christ's Divinity, whilst we are engaged in spreading the triumphs of the Cross. But if the Calvinist feels it indispensable to mingle his peculiar principles with his missionary exertions, let not others degrade their labours of love by any such false, dangerous, and unjustifiable sentiments. Let them be earnest, indeed, at all times, to spread the knowledge of Christ; but let them do it with calmness, and sobriety, and on the most deliberate convictions of their duty. "No man may deliver his brother, nor make agreement unto God for him; for it cost more to redeem their souls, so that he must let that alone for ever."

I have thus endeavoured to put my reader into possession of this important subject as it relates both to Christians and unbelievers. If I have succeeded in establishing the salvability of the Heathen on the sure grounds of Scriptural authority, then, I trust, we shall no longer hear of

its being a merely curious and doubtful speculation, nor hear it derided as an enquiry which concerns us not;—Let such selfishness stand rebuked by Pagan benevolence:—

Homo sum, humani nihil à me alienum puto.

It is, indeed, high time that the advocates for Universal Redemption should consider the import and extent of that doctrine which they profess to defend; for unless the whole of Christendom is gradually to be brought under the dominion of Calvinism, I am convinced that we must re-measure our ground, by preaching Christ not only as He is, "the Head of the Church," but also as He is, "the Saviour of the world."

How far this doctrine respecting the salvability of the Heathen, should be brought forward by those who are actually engaged in their conversion, must entirely depend on local circumstances. It would be useless, perhaps dangerous, to urge it on those who are altogether barbarous and uncivilized. The Negro and the Hottentot are most effectually converted by preaching merely the doctrine of the cross. It is

by affecting their hearts, that we bring them to receive the glad tidings of Christ's redemption. But, in all cases, where the missionary is engaged with more civilized and intellectual nations, I am persuaded, that the previous admission, that God has provided, through Christ, for the sins of the whole world, would be attended with the best effect on their errors and prejudices. The truth is, that the bigotted Musselman or the metaphysical Hindoo stand rather in the situation of polished infidels, than of ignorant barbarians; and that, unless you "reason with them concerning righteousness and judgment to come," and the general truths of Natural Religion, you are not likely to convert them to Christianity*. But to do this with effect, the Gospel must be set forth as a universal channel of reconciliation between God and man; not as a religion which belongs to any exclusive portion of the human race. It must be represented as "the purpose by which, and for which, are all things;" not

* See Bp. *Heber's* Primary Charge.

as the exclusive privilege of any order or community. By holding forth the encrease of responsibility which the knowledge of the Revelation confers upon those who hear it, you make a strong appeal to their understanding, and you treat them, in fact, in the very way and manner in which St. Paul addressed the Athenians,—"The times of this ignorance hath God winked at, but *now* commandeth men every where *to* repent," &c.

Lastly, I would submit to the consideration of Christians in general, and of my brethren in the ministry in particular, whether the severe and contracted sentiments which have been so generally entertained by Christians, respecting the state and condition of the unconverted Heathen, are not very similar and parallel to the same views which were formerly entertained by the Jews, respecting all Gentile nations. But, knowing, as we do from Scripture, that such opinions were false and uncharitable, and were highly displeasing to the Author and Finisher of our faith, may we not infer, on the same au-

thority, that such opinions are now equally indefensible? "As the promises made unto the Fathers" were not designed for the exclusive benefit of the Jewish nation, though the Jewish Church was the depository and guardian of the Scriptures which contained them; so, I would respectfully submit, that, when God in these latter days spake to us by his Son, he sent a universal message to all mankind. The Christian Church is now "the ground, and pillar, and guardian of the truth;" but the blessing of Christ's Redemption extends to all nations:—"He hath made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world."

Having thus developed the argument, as it relates to the friends and advocates of Christianity, I shall venture to address a few considerations to those who either doubt or deny the evidences of our religion.

Upon the principles which are here laid down, it is apparent, that the Gospel can no longer be charged with being a partial and inadequate system. As a dispensation of mercy, it has always been in the world;

and it has provided for the moral and spiritual wants of all ages and all countries.

Upon this hypothesis, then, every candid Deist must acknowledge, that the recent publication, and the partial knowledge of Christianity, ought no longer to be urged, as any insurmountable objection to the credibility of its revelation.

As a consistent Deist, you believe in the doctrine of a Providence which has superintended all the individuals of the human race from the creation to the present hour; and which has distributed its gifts, in endless varieties and proportions, to men of different characters, countries, abilities, and means of knowledge. But it is to sustain this belief, and to justify the dealings of Providence, that we submit to you this view of the Christian Dispensation.

It deserves your peculiar attention, because it is, in a great measure, founded on the arguments and acknowledgments of Deism. Here there is no attempt to disguise the fact, that the knowledge of Christianity is partially diffused, and that four thousand years had passed away before

it appeared in the world as a doctrinal system. Here there is no attempt to deny the fact, that God has been pleased to place mankind under an indefinite variety of forms, as to their manners, opinions, their modes of worship, and their materials of belief on moral and religious subjects. All this is not only granted and admitted, but the whole argument is founded on these facts, and is identified with their existence.

Our facts, our premises, being the same, we differ only as to the conclusions which should be deduced. Such facts appear to us to betoken sin and disorder, and to require some Divine interference; whereas, upon your principles, every thing is right and correct, and, as such, is ratified and approved by the Deity.

But, if so, where is the unity of truth, and where the beauty of virtue? What mean those cries and acknowledgments of guilt which have been embodied in endless sacrifices and superstitions? Besides, on this view of mankind, how can you support your cause against the Atheist? Where

are the marks of equity and justice, and holiness, if you allow, that all this confusion neither requires nor admits of correction?

We entreat you, then, to contemplate this argument for the salvability of the Heathen, as it relates to your own objections to the Christian Revelation. It is *such* a view of Christianity as probably may not hitherto have attracted your attention. It presents the basis of our religion as co-extensive with reason, and as adequate to meet and sustain every possible exigency in which mankind can be placed. Whether savage or civilized, whether roving in the forest, or residing in the crowded city, human nature is here provided with a retreat which is suited to all the diversities of ignorance and knowledge. Here is a clue to guide the traveller—"qui mores hominum multorum vidit et urbes"—through all the labyrinths of human life. But, remember, that whilst it explains the difficulties, it establishes the responsibility of each individual. If, then, there be a possibility of truth in

this view of the Christian dispensation, reflect that the acceptance or rejection of Christianity *may* be your portion of moral trial. At any rate, it deserves your enquiry, because it takes up your own favourite positions, and adduces them as arguments for the Bible. I am willing to allow, that no revelation could be divine, which was not universal in its principle. I am willing to admit that no revelation could be divine which was not available, in its effect, to the wants of *all* mankind *. But the concession of these points loudly

* If Mahometanism be tried by this test, its imposture may be at once detected, because it offers salvation *only* to its believers. "It must be remembered," says Sale, "that the infidels alone will be liable to eternity of damnation; for the Moslems, or those who have embraced the true religion, and have been guilty of heinous sins, will be delivered thence after they have expiated their crimes by their sufferings." *Sale's Koran*, vol. i. p. 122. Such partiality is at once decisive of the imposture. But, if the universality of system be a test whereby to distinguish a genuine from a false revelation, it must apply, in all its force, to those interpretations of Scripture, which would confine the benefits of the dispensation to a small proportion of mankind.

calls upon you to re-examine the evidence for Christianity; because you cannot deny, that, *if* such a revelation has been given, its acceptance or rejection to those who have the opportunity of examining it, *may* constitute the test and criterion by which they shall be tried hereafter.

For once, then, read the Bible, not as it relates to the Jew or the Christian, but as it comprehends all mankind. Contemplate it in all the immensity of Nature and Providence. Read it, as you now read the works of God.—But should you find, that it is like the sun in the firmament, which shines with various degrees of light and heat in different climes, which saves the Laplander from perishing, and which glows upon the shores of Britain; then, close not your eyes against its beams—"If the light which is in you become darkness, how great will that darkness be!"

Postscript.

To enable the reader to comprehend, at one view, the leading propositions which are maintained in the preceding work, I have drawn up the following list, which I would submit as an attempt at defining the "Principia" of Scientific Theology.

I. It is essential to a Divine Revelation, that the theory or system, on which it is founded, be universal; and consequently, that it bear a relation to the whole world in which it is published.

II. It is essential to a Divine Revelation, that it be one and the same in all its stages, so far as its system or theory is concerned; and that it be not dependant for its first and essential benefit on the accidents of time and place.

1. The theory or system of the Gospel is universal, and as such, has a relation to the whole human race.

2. The covenant of God in Christ is

a covenant for the redemption of the world, not a covenant for the redemption of the ancient Jews, or the modern Christians.

3. In consequence of this covenant (the covenant of grace), every human being is born in a salvable condition; and therefore, all infants dying in their infancy, are undoubtedly saved.

4. No more is demanded from any man than God has given him the means of performing, every merciful allowance being made for sins of ignorance and infirmity.

5. It is a false and unscriptural tenet, "that there is no salvation out of the Church."

6. The Church, whether Patriarchal, Jewish or Christian, is the appointed pillar, trustee and guardian of the Revelation, whilst the Dispensation extends to all the world.

7. The Sacraments of the Church are generally necessary to Salvation, that is, necessary where they can be observed by its members; ergo, they are not neces-

sary to those who have not the knowledge of the Revelation.

8. Baptism is a sacred recognition of that state of salvation, as relative to Christians, which is imparted to all men through the covenant of grace.

9. The Lord's Supper is a sacred recognition, by the members of the Church, of that atonement which has made a propitiation for the sins of the whole world.

10. The distinction between covenanted and uncovenanted mercies is unscriptural, all mercies coming to fallen men, through the covenant of grace.

11. When the term "Jew and Gentile," or "Jew and Greek," is used indefinitely in the New Testamant, it comprehends all Gentiles, and not merely the converts to Christianity.

12. The relation of Christ to all men as their Creator, Redeemer and Judge is the foundation of the doctrine of his divinity.

13. If the doctrine of Universal Redemption be not maintained as relative to

the Heathen, it cannot be maintained as relative to the members of the Church.

14. The strongest position we can take against the Romanists, is by denying the doctrine of exclusive salvation to the members of the Church.

15. The strongest confutation of Calvinism consists in shewing the salvability of all men, but more particularly of the Heathen.

16. The strongest confutation of *Unitarianism* consists in identifying the offices of Christ, as the Creator, Redeemer and Judge of the world, with the universality of the divine attributes.

17. The strongest confutation of *Deism* consists in proving the universality of the Christian dispensation.

18. The obligation to diffuse the knowledge of Christianity, is an obligation for which Christians will be made responsible; but the neglect of this obligation does not destroy the salvability of the Heathen.

19. As Christian privileges are the trials and obligations of Christians, so the

Heathen are answerable only for that smaller portion of light which they possess; "there is no respect of persons with God"

20. As Infidels and Heathen are the moral antipodes of each other, so every argument on behalf of involuntary ignorance, becomes an argument against the abuse of knowledge.

21. The systems of providence and grace being cotemporary and co-ordinate, they should never be disunited or separated from each other.

22. As Christ is the Creator and the Judge of all men, so his Redemption must relate to all mankind.

Such is a short specimen of what may be termed "Scripture Logic," or the method of deducing general truths from the facts and doctrines of the Christian Revelation. How far the present work exhibits a test and example of this kind of inductive reasoning, must be left for the public to determine; but it is evident, that if the study of theology shall ever assume a regular and scientific form, it must be conducted according to some method of this

kind. With too many even of professional students, the science of divinity consists of little more than an assemblage of unconnected texts and of heterogeneous comments, but if the genius of Bacon shall ever preside over the science of theology, it must be accomplished by steadily applying the principles of Inductive Logic to those facts and doctrines which are recorded in Scripture.

It is after this method, that *I* have endeavoured to establish the much controverted doctrine of Heathen salvability on the firm foundation of Scriptural authority. If I have succeeded, let others more able and more acute, apply this "novum organum" to some other controversial topics, and they will find, that there is still a mine of wealth which has never been explored by those who have gone before us, and that Christian Theology is still capable of much improvement in its scientific arrangements.

APPENDIX I.

CONTAINING THE

SENTIMENTS

OF

ENGLISH AND FOREIGN DIVINES,

RESPECTING THE

SALVABILITY OF THE HEATHEN.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

THOUGH in the body of this work, I have been desirous of establishing the doctrine of Heathen salvability by the sole force of Scriptural evidence, yet as I am sensible of the weight which many attach to the authority of eminent writers, I shall now present my reader with a selection from the most distinguished authors who have incidentally touched on this subject.

After long and minute enquiry, I have not been able to meet with any work in the English language which treats professedly upon "*the salvability of the Heathen*," though it enters of course, into many of our works on systematic Theology. At the end of the "Cambridge tracts on Predestination," there is a short appendix, with this title; but it is very vague and inconclusive, imploring it rather from our good nature, than establishing it by any impression on our judgment. It was designed as a corrective to the strange sentiments of Plaifere, who, in his "Appello Evangelium," had distinctly disclaimed all belief in the salvability of the Heathen, whilst professedly arguing for the doctrine of universal redemption, as relative to the members of the church. Yet this is the writer whom

Bishop Mant has incautiously styled, "a judicious divine." *Bampt. Lec.* p. 172.

Of the writers who have alluded to this subject, there are three classes. First, those who have positively *denied* the salvability of all Heathen. Such were Augustine, Fulgentius, and several of the later fathers; the greater part of the schoolmen and nearly all the Calvinistic divines. Amongst these, the most eminent writer of our Church, is Bishop Beveridge, who has not scrupled to adopt these opinions in his treatise on the Articles; and Ridgeley, Gill, &c. amongst the dissenters.

Secondly, those who are *undecided*, and who think that we have not sufficient evidence in Scripture to come to any positive conclusion. Amongst these are Archbishops Sharpe, and Secker, Dr. South, and many of the Hutchinsonian and Evangelical divines.

Thirdly, Those who have positively *asserted* the doctrine, and from these, I now propose to adduce a considerable number of authorities; but in the first place, we shall endeavour to ascertain what are the sentiments of the Church of England on this interesting subject.

A living prelate of great learning and judgment, has asserted that our church "determines not the case of the Gentile world, nor in any way solves a question foreign to her purpose;" *Laurence, Bamp. Lect.* p. 96., though he allows that, from the sentiments of our reformers, "they seemed to assert, what Zuingle had boldly and publicly taught, that the kingdom of heaven is open to Heathens as well as to Christians; at least, in the liberal language of the Zuinglians,

they held the oblation of Christ on the cross "to be a perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world." P. 97.

I confess, that I am at a loss to ascertain the exact import of this passage. If our reformers introduced this language into their public formularies, surely, it is clear, that their sentiments were in favour of our argument. The passage which Archbishop Laurence has cited occurs in the sacramental service; but there are others which appear to be still more decisive. Thus the child in the catechism is instructed to answer concerning Christ, "Who hath redeemed me and *all* mankind." Even respecting the sacraments he is instructed to affirm they are only "*generally* necessary to salvation," an expression which denotes that they are not indispensable where they cannot be obtained. In the "general thanksgiving," we return thanks to Almighty God "for his goodness and loving-kindness to us and *to all* men," &c. In the litany we beseech God, "that he would have mercy upon all men," a petition which could not be justified, if we did not believe, that "it is his nature and property ever to have mercy and forgive." These and many similar passages in our Prayer book seem clearly to intimate that, according to our church, the Heathen will be mercifully dealt with by God, and that they are left not in a state of hopeless condemnation.

Archbishop Laurence, like most other writers, whilst treating on this subject, has adopted the distinction between "covenanted and uncovenanted" mercies; but it has been one of the leading objects of this work to shew, that this distinction has no authority in

Scripture. "As there is salvation in no other than Christ," so is there "no other name given under heaven whereby we may be saved." If, then, the Heathen be in a salvable condition, they are within the covenant of grace, and their ignorance of that covenant, can no more affect their salvability, than the ignorance of children, who die before they can exercise faith. As to the question of infant salvability, it would be a libel on our church to suppose, that she had any doubts respecting those who die before baptism. But, her expression that the sacraments are only *generally* necessary to salvation, clearly determines the point.

The question concerning the distinction between "covenanted and uncovenanted mercies," appears to me to lie at the bottom of the whole controversy. If it can be shewn, that the covenant of redemption was made with the Jews of old, or with the Christians at present, then there is an end to all argument for *Heathen* salvability. But if it were a covenant for the redemption of the world, then all men are alike interested in its benefits. It is the covenant under which every human creature is born into the world.

Having ventured these few strictures on the admirable work of Archbishop Laurence, I beg leave to recommend it as containing a most comprehensive view of the opinions of the English and foreign reformers on this important subject.

"God is naturally good, and willeth all men to be saved, and careth for and provideth all things by which they may be saved, except, by their own malice, they will be evil; and so, by the righteous judgment of

God, they perish at last." "*Necessary Erudition*," cited by *Laurence*, p. 339.

"Can any man be saved but by Christ? No—but many may be saved by him, who never heard of Him. He died to make satisfaction to the infinite justice for the sins of the whole world, and took our nature upon him to atone for our fallen nature, to be applied to such who perform the conditions required. He will judge the Gentiles by the law of morality which he has planted in their hearts, and we call natural religion; but from Christians he will require faith in Christ, joined with sincere repentance." *Leslie's Case stated between the Church of Rome and England*, vol. i. p. 477. N. B. This acute writer saw the necessity of denying the popish dogma, "there is no salvation out of the Church."

The most powerful and elaborate defence of this doctrine, as it concerns the Heathen, is to be found in Barrow's Five Sermons on Universal Redemption. It would be impossible, in the narrow limits of an Appendix, to render full justice to his statement; but his principal arguments may be arranged under the following heads: 1. That we are commanded to love our enemies. 2. To pray for all men. 3. That God is the Saviour of all men. 4. That all are invited to repentance. 5. That individual assurance of salvation is not indispensable. 6. That infants and ideots can be saved. 7. That Christ is the Creator of all men. 8. That he is the Judge of all men. 9. That all can partake of his redemption. 10. That the providence of God is universal. 11. That the Gospel is tidings of great joy to all. 12. That Christ should be the head of the Heathen.

13. That otherwise they would have no redress for the evils of this life. 14. That God is no respecter of persons. 15. That it is a motive for universal charity. 16. That all are to be rewarded according to their works. 17. That God giveth grace to all. 18. That God is called the Father of all men. 19. That he delighteth not in the death of a sinner. 20. That Christ's atonement was sufficient for all. 21. That the same conditions are proposed to all. 22. Examples of virtuous Heathens mentioned in Scripture. 23. That our Lord triumphed over the devil. 24. That our acceptance depends on the testimony of a good conscience. 25. That Christ, as God and man, was equally related to all. 26. That the love of God is over all. 27. That all are made of one blood. 28. That Christ is the head over all. 29. That all are included under sin. From this accumulation of argument, adorned with all the beauty of language, and illumined with all the splendor of Scripture imagery, this powerful divine deduces the conclusion, " that our Lord is the Saviour of all men, since he has rendered all '*salvabiles*,' capable of salvation, and '*salvandos*,' designed for salvation."

" Since mankind could not be saved by the covenant of works, i. e. of exact obedience, they must perish for ever, or else hope to be saved by a covenant of ease and remission; i. e. such a covenant as may secure man's duty to God, and God's mercy to man, and this is the covenant which God made with mankind in Christ Jesus, the covenant of repentance. This covenant began immediately after Adam's fall. For as soon as the first covenant—the covenant of works—was broken, God promised to make it up by an instrument of mercy,

which himself would find out; but that this should be acted and published in its own time, and not presently. In the mean time, man was, by virtue of that new covenant and promise, admitted to repentance." *Bishop Taylor's Unum Necessarium.*

In the able review of Taylor's Life and Writings, by Bishop Heber, there are some judicious strictures on that prelate's peculiar sentiments concerning the covenant under which Adam was born; but, that Bishop Heber's opinion coincides with our conclusion respecting the salvability of Heathen nations through the death of Christ, may be inferred from the following declaration. "Augustine himself never taught that Socrates or Marcus Aurelius were to be numbered in the same category of eternal suffering with Simon Magus or Nero. But Augustine, nevertheless, like the Romish Church and the Calvinists, was peremptory in consigning them to some portion of everlasting misery; and in fact, if it be allowed that no flesh can escape except through Christ, it seems absolutely necessary, if we would escape from these revolting consequences, to affirm, as has been already hinted, an extension of the merits of Christ's blood, and the help of the Holy Spirit, beyond the limits of the visible Church, and the list of those who have heard the tidings of salvation." *Heber's Life of Bishop Taylor*, p. 225.

"Great and inestimably beneficial effects may accrue from the mission of Christ, and especially from his death, which do not belong to Christianity as a *revelation;* that is, they might have existed, and they might have been accomplished, though we had never, in this life, been made acquainted with them. These

effects may be very extensive. They may be interesting to other orders of intelligent beings. I think it is a general opinion, and one to which I have long come, that the beneficial effects of Christ's death extend to the whole human species. It was the redemption of *the world.* "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the whole world," 1 *John* ii. 2. Probably the future happiness, perhaps the future existence of the species, and more gracious terms of acceptance extended *to all*, might depend on it, or be procured by it. Now these effects, whatever they be, do not belong to Christianity as *a revelation*, because they exist with respect to those to whom it is *not revealed.*" *Paley's Evidences*, vol. ii. p. 22. note.

"There is no need so uncharitably to conclude, (as some of the ancients have done, not all, nor the most ancient,) that there were no good men amongst the Heathen, and that the brightest of their virtues were counterfeit, and only in show and appearance. For there might be several good men amongst the Gentiles, in the same condition that Cornelius was before he became a Christian; of whom, it is said, whilst he was yet a Gentile, 'that he was a devout man and feared God, and that his prayers and alms were accepted of God;' a certain sign that they were no counterfeits. And if he had died in that condition before Christ had been revealed to him, I do not see what reasonable cause of doubt there can be concerning his salvation. And yet, it is a most certain and inviolable truth, that 'there is no other name given under heaven whereby we may be saved, but the name of Jesus; neither is

there salvation in any other.' And good men, in all ages and nations, from the beginning of the world, both before the law, and under the law, and without the law, such 'as feared God, and worked righteousness, were accepted of him' in that name, and by the meritorious sacrifice of that Lamb of God; which, in respect of the virtue and efficacy of it, is said to have 'been slain from the beginning of the world.' *Tillotson*, vol. iii. p. 347." See, also, vol. ii. p. 373. serm. xc. and xcviii.

"God, the supreme Governor and Lord of the universe, who 'worketh all things after the counsel of his will,' having appointed, in the unsearchable wisdom of his government, that the method by which sinful men should be brought unto salvation, should be by his Son's appearing and suffering in the flesh, thought fit, from the beginning of the world, to give man, at first, obscure notices, and, afterwards, by degrees, clearer and clearer predictions of a Saviour, who should come, in the fulness of time, to be their Redeemer, Mediator, Intercessor, and Judge, &c. He opened his Divine intention first, obscurely, to Adam; then to Moses; and, as the time drew nearer, by the prophets. Under all which dispensations, they who obeyed the word of God, according to the mannner in which it was revealed to them, were each entitled to the benefits of the whole salvation; and notwithstanding their different degrees of knowledge, are all of them finally to be gathered into one in Christ; so that he, to whom much is revealed, shall have nothing over; and he, to whom little is revealed, shall have no lack; when, at the consummation of all things, they shall all meet in one great

and general assembly of the first-born which are written in heaven: Patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and whosoever have in all ages, after the pattern of these great examples, obeyed the commandments of God as made known unto them, whether by the light of nature, or by the law of Moses, or by the Gospel of Christ." *Clarke's Sermons*, vol. v. p. 15. See, also, vol. iv. p. 27. and 207. vol. viii. p. 232. vol. x. p. 54.

"All men shall be judged by the law, which was given them of God to live by. For it is the same law, which is, 'regula officii, et judicii.' God will not condemn men for not believing a truth, which, mediately or immediately, was never revealed to them, and which they had not the means to know; nor for not obeying a law which was never promulgated to them, and which they could not become acquainted with." *Baxter's Reasons of the Christian Religion*, part i. ch. 17. "Though God has also pleased less shortly to acquaint us on what terms he dealeth with those who hear not Christ, yet it being most clear and certain, that he dealeth with them on terms of grace, and not on the terms of the rigorous law of works; this may evince their title to be the Mediator's subjects and redeemed." *Baxter's Universal Redemption*, p. 37. et passim.

"God having laid down this method in the dispensation of his gifts, 'that he who is faithful in the least, shall have a suitable reward;' and to 'him that hath,' so as to improve what he enjoys, 'shall more be given,' and vice versa; we may hence rationally conclude, that he who diligently endeavours to do good according to that light he hath received, shall find some tokens of the favour of God, and that if any further aid

be requisite to enable the Heathen acceptably to perform their duty, the divine goodness will impart that also by those secret dispensations of his providence, which we are not acquainted with. For as to ideots and infants amongst Christians, God's mercies are vouchsafed, and our Saviour's meritorious performances are applied, in a manner not understood by us, without any capacity in them to know or believe any thing; so may God's grace be communicated, and the merits of Christ avail for ignorant Heathens, in a manner unknown and unsearchable by us." *Whitby on the Five Points*, p. 381.

"The everlasting states of mankind are not to depend on their being of this or that nation, or on any merely external differences, since 'God hath made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth, and hath determined the bounds of their habitation.' They all have the same parents as the Jews had, though their immediate parents were not the same. By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all: and therefore, as by one man's disobedience many (*οἱ πολλοι*, the many, i. e. the whole body of mankind, and not the Jews only, who are but a handful of people in comparison,) were made sinners, and treated as such; it was the good pleasure of God, that by the obedience of one, the same 'many' should be made righteous, i. e. restored to a capacity of light and immortality, as if they were perfectly righteous." *Grove's Sermons*, vol. iii. p. 111.

"Christ's satisfaction upon the cross was not partial, but universal. He died for all mankind in general, as

well for those who went before, as those who came after him; as well for those who have not, as those who have opportunities of knowing him. He is for this reason styled 'The Saviour of the world.' He is upon this account said 'to give himself a ransom for all,' and to 'taste of death for every man,' &c. Men will be judged variously, in proportion to their various means and opportunities of knowing and doing their duty; for what justice would it be to expect the same return of duty and obedience from the wild Indian in his hut, or the wild savage in the woods, as from those who had the advantage of a learned and Christian education." *Bishop Newton's Sermon before the Gospel Society*, p. 411.

"If mankind, whether Christians or Heathens, are ever saved, it must be by means which Christianity prescribes, and with that salvation which is the promise and purchase of our Lord Jesus Christ, without which even infinite love and goodness cannot prevent their final and total destruction. This is not a mere voluntary constitution, but as certain as things themselves, or as unchangeable as eternal truth. And if the Heathen are saved, it must be according to the Gospel scheme and by the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. It is possible, that much of Christ may be known, even where his name is not preached. Many of the truths he has revealed, may, in a greater or less measure, be understood by a right use of reason. And the knowledge of such truths may promote the genuine effects of repentance, and proportionably incite men to the love and fear of God," &c. *Chandler's Sermons*, vol. iv. p. 241.

" God himself has told us that where much is given, much will be required; where little is given, little shall be required. To infants, deaf men, madmen, nothing, for aught we know, is given, and if so, nothing will be required. Others perhaps, have the means to believe 'that God is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him,' and to whom thus much is given, to them it shall not be damnable, that they believe only thus much. Which, methinks is very manifest from the apostle in the epistle to the Hebrews, where, having first said 'that without faith it is impossible to please God,' he subjoins as his reason, 'for whosoever cometh to God must believe that he is,' &c. Where, in my opinion, this is plainly intimated, that this is the *minimum quod sic*, the lowest degree of faith, wherein, in men capable of faith, God will be pleased; and that with this lowest degree he will be pleased; where means of rising higher are deficient," &c. *Chillingworth's Religion of Protestants.* ch. iii. Sect. xiii. p. 97. Of the same opinion was "the ever memorable" Mr. Hale; see his treatise on "Erring Christians." *Works*, vol. ii. p. 69.

" Criminal unbelief may be justly punished, unbelief not criminal, may draw punishment after it, if it give occasion, as it naturally will, to an abandoned and profligate career of life. But further than this we cannot go; for 'when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves;' and when they who are strangers to the Gospel of Christ fulfil the precept of the Gospel, they will doubtless, in some degree, be entitled to its privileges, and share

in its rewards. We presume not, however to affirm, that they will be placed on a level with Christians, nor to deny it: on this point the Scriptures are not explicit." *T. Balguy's Discourse*, p. 163.

"What effect the Gospel scheme of redemption through Christ may have on those who lived of old under the law of nature or any other law, or who since the coming of Christ have continued in the same circumstances, it becomes us with great caution to enquire, because the Scriptures have not explicitly or fully instructed us in the matter. But from certain expressions occasionaly dropped, by the sacred writers, such as 'that Christ died for all,' 'that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself,' that 'Christ is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but for the sins of the whole world;' from these and other passages of the like nature, we are authorized to conclude, that the benefits of Christ's death do extend in some sense, to all men: that though each will be judged by the law he lived under, the issue of that judgment will respect the death of Christ; that their living again to receive the recompence of the deeds done in the body however nature might suggest this event, is, in fact, brought about *through the redemption that is in Christ.*" *Hurd's Sermons*, vol. i. p. 77. It seems to follow from St. Paul's assertion, that "as in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all be made alive," and from the idea given us of the Redeemer, as of "the lamb slain from the foundation of the world;" that the benefits of Christ's death extend to all men, of all times, and are, in the proper sense of the word, *universal.* Only it is to be remembered, that, if all men have an

interest in Christ, whether they know it or not, *we* who do know what our interest in him is, have infinitely the advantage of them, and are inexcusable, if we reject it. Thus far then we go on safe grounds, and affirm, without hesitation, that "God," through his mercies in Christ Jesus "is the Saviour of all men, but especially of them that believe." vol. ii. p. 291.

"If all men have received a loss from Adam which leads to condemnation, then all men have received a gift from Christ which leads to justification. But the first, is true; therefore also the last. From which it follows, that all men, even the Heathen, may be saved, for Christ was given as 'a light to lighten the Gentiles.' *Isaiah*, xlxix. 6. Now, to say, that though they might have been saved, yet none were, is to judge uncharitably. I see not what reason can be alleged for it; yea, though it were granted, which never can be, that none of the Heathen were saved; it will not thence follow, that they could not have been saved, or that none now in their condition can be saved. For 'A non esse, ad non posse, non datur sequela.' That consequence is false, which concludes a thing cannot be, because it is not." *Barclay's Apology*, p. 184.

"Concerning my opinion about the death of Christ, which is, that he died for the salvation of all, without exception, and, consequently, for Heathens, as well as those who enjoy the oral ministry of the Gospel; I herein hold nothing, but what was generally taught and received in the Church of Christ, for three hundred years together next after the times of the apostles; which, by all our modern Protestant divines, and by Calvin, in an especial manner, are acknowledged, as

times, in which the Christian religion reigned in the greatest purity; as I am able to make substantial proof by express testimonies, and these not a few, from the best records of those times." *Goodwin's Redemption Redeemed.* See, also, a scarce pamphlet by the same, entitled, " *The Pagan's Debt and Dowry;* or a brief discussion of the question, whether, how far, and in what sense, such persons of mankind, amongst whom the letter of theGospel never came, are, notwithstanding, said to believe in Jesus Christ." Lond. 1651. " This pamphlet," says his late biographer, " contains some able and ingenious reasoning respecting the moral obligations of the Heathen, and in defence of their salvability; subjects, on which crude and indigested speculations have been often advanced. Some persons laudably aiming to prove the necessity, as well as the advantage of (a written) revelation against the assumption of infidelity; and others desirous of giving the greatest possible impulse to the cause of Christian missions, have represented the salvation of men, without the direct and perfect light of the Gospel, as absolutely impossible. But there is nothing in the doctrine of unconditional reprobation, as taught by Calvin himself, that is more revolting and objectionable," &c. See *Goodwin's Life, by Thomas Jackson,* p. 266.

" Upon the whole view of the thing, I think, from reason and Scripture together, we may justly conclude, that when Christ and the Gospel are not published, all humble and sincere penitents asking pardon of God, and hoping his mercies, though they know nothing of the particular way or method wherein it is, or has

been, or shall be revealed, shall not fail of pardon and acceptance with God," &c. See *Watts's Strength and Weakness of Human Reason*, conference 1, where the question of Heathen salvability is fully debated.

"The benefits of Christ's death are not confined to the persons to whom the Gospel has been actually revealed; that would exclude from salvation all who lived before, and the far greater part of those who have lived since the birth of our Saviour." See *Bishop Tomline's Refutation of Calvinism*, p. 199. "Men will be judged according to the light which has been afforded them by the dispensations under which they have lived, whether it shall have been the law of nature, the law of Moses, or the law of the Gospel, all equally derived from the same divine Author. The virtuous Heathen, the observant Jew, and the serious Christian, will all owe their salvation to the precious blood of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," p. 263. See also *Bishop Burnet's* Exposition of the 18th Article.

"What shall become of all the race of mankind, who, having never heard of the promise of a Saviour, not a word of a Messias to be sent or to come, have had no thought or belief concerning him?—To this I answer, that God will require of every man 'according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not.' He will not expect the improvement of ten talents, when he gave but one; nor require that any should believe a promise, of which he has never heard," &c. *Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity*, p. 252.

"It has been much disputed, whether it be possible that the Heathen should be saved. Some have absolutely denied it, (upon the authority of the texts men-

tioned in the proposition,) which universally require *faith in Christ*. But, to this it is answered, that they can only regard such to whom the Gospel comes, and are capable of understanding the contents of it. The truth seems to be, that none of the Heathen will be condemned for not believing the Gospel, but that they are liable to condemnation for the breach of God's natural law. Nevertheless, if there be any of them in whom there is a prevailing love to the Divine Being, and care in the practice of virtue, there seems reason to believe that for the sake of Christ, though to them unknown, they may be accepted of God; and so much the rather as the ancient Jews, and even the apostles of Christ, during the time of our Saviour's abode upon earth, seem to have had but little notion of those doctrines, which those who deny the salvability of the Heathen, are most apt to imagine fundamental." *Doddridge's Lectures*, vol. ii. p. 240.

" God will deal with them (the Heathen) in a just, wise, and equitable way, and will make proper allowances for every want of the advantages which others enjoy. The asserters of the Christian revelation are under no obligation to limit God's universal benevolence. They leave those that are destitute of this Revelation to God's infinite mercy, and can think more favourably of their case than they consistently can do, who will not allow they were under any great darkness, and suppose them to have acted in manifest opposition to the most clear and universal light." *Leland's Deistical Writers*, vol. i. p. 20. ' I need not take any particular notice of what his lordship (Bolingbroke) hath offered against the Christian revelation, drawn from its not having been

universally published in all nations and ages. The chief force of what he has urged depends upon this supposition, that, according to the Gospel, all those should be damned that do not believe in Christ, whether they ever heard of him or not—'damned,' as he expresses it, 'even in their involuntary ignorance;' —which is expressly contrary to the tenor of St. Paul's reasoning, in the second chapter of the Romans. The declarations, made in the Gospel, of the necessity of believing in Christ, and the punishment of those who do not believe, plainly relate to those who have an opportunity of being acquainted with the Christian revelation," &c. Vol. ii. p. 210. See also the same author against *Tindal*, vol. ii. p. 575. Also, *Bp. Conybeare against Tindal*, p. 419.

"Consider the world as divided into two parts, one whereof has had the oracles of God committed to them, and the other has been left to the guidance of mere reason and nature, and from the maxim of the text, (*Luke* xii. 48.) you may learn these general truths, with respect to each sort and condition of men: first, that no man shall be judged by a law of which he had no knowledge, but every man shall stand or fall by the light that was given him. It being true of every moral action, what St. Paul has affirmed of alms-giving, "It shall be accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not," &c. *Bp. Sherlock's Discourses*, vol. ii. p. 121.

"The death of our Saviour, when he did die, was just as beneficial as it could possibly have been, ever so much earlier. And as we firmly believe, that it was highly beneficial to many who trusted in God's mercy,

with a very obscure knowledge of him: so we are far from denying, that it may have been beneficial to many others, who trusted in the same mercy, without any present knowledge of him at all." *Abp. Secker's Sermons*, vol. iv. p. 145.

"Our Saviour laid down his life for the sins of the whole world. He came, that, 'as in Adam all die, so in Christ should all be made alive.' Clemens Romanus an apostolical father, expressly declares, 'that the blood of Jesus was so precious in God's sight, as to obtain the privilege of repentance for the whole world, in all past ages, and that the Ninevites, repenting upon the preaching of Jonas, were saved by it, though aliens from God.' From hence, we may conclude, that though those, who have performed the condition of the Gospel covenant, faith and penitential obedience, shall shine out with distinguished glory; yet that the benefits of the passion shall be applied, even to those that never heard his name. The sphere of his benificence extended backward to the foundation of the world, and reaches forward to the last conflagration; so that nothing, which is capable of being saved is 'hid from the heat thereof.' He became the Saviour of all ages, from the first birth of time to its last period: the Father of mankind from the rising up of the sun, to the going down of the same. The blessings of his coming into the world are as extensive as the World, and as lasting as Eternity." *Seed's Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 412.

"The Patriarchal, the Jewish, and Christian religion all profess to come from the only one God, the creator of all things. Hence, the whole race of

mankind must be the common object of its Creator's care; all his revelations, even those given only to a part, must needs be thought ultimately directed to the interest of the whole," &c. *Bp. Warburton's Div. Legat.* vol. iv. p. 184.

"The Christian Dispensation is, in some sense, universal, though the light of the Gospel has not been every where enjoyed. The benefits of it went backward to the creation, and forward to the consummation, comprehending at the same time, all people and nations, and languages. Our Redeemer, far from being partial, has grasped the whole globe, and extended the chief of his blessings over all the ends of the earth." *John Balguy's second Letter to a Deist*, p. 333.

"What shall be the lot of all those who lived and died strangers to Christianity?—They are in the hands of a gracious God, who may bestow on them the mercies of a redemption of which they have never heard. Without the death of Christ no flesh could have been saved. But who can say, to how many, and in what different ways, the merits of that death may be applied? For his sake, the sins may be pardoned of all those who, in honesty and uprightness, did their best, according to the knowledge vouchsafed them, during the dispensation under which they lived. He who holds up his hand at the bar of eternal judgment, will not there be tried by a law which he never knew, &c. The same limitation must of course take place in the case of infants, idiots, persons insane, and any way so defective in understanding, as to be incapable of learning and believing aright. He who made us

knoweth whereof we are made; he knows what is in man, in every man, and will not exact the tale of bricks, where he hath not thought proper to furnish the straw. We may conclude, in like manner, concerning what is called *invincible ignorance*, or ignorance, so circumstanced, as to admit of no remedy. 'How can they hear without a preacher?' Where nothing is taught, nothing can be learned." *Bishop Horne's Sermons*, p. 473.

"Powerful is the atonement of our blessed Redeemer to procure pardon for the greatest sinner who has been penitent. We have all reason to believe, that amidst numberless infirmities which attend humanity, what the great Judge will chiefly regard, is the prevailing turn of our heart and life, how far we have been actuated by a sincere desire to do our duty. This we know for certain, that all the measures of this judgment shall be conducted with the most perfect equity. God will not exact from any man what he hath never given him. He will judge him according to the degree of light that was afforded him, according to the means of knowledge and improvement that were put into his hands. Hence, many a virtuous Heathen shall be preferred before many mere professors of Christian faith." *Blair's Sermons*, vol. iv. p. 565.

"When a missionary asked an old Indian chief, 'Why do not you red men, know as much as we white men?' He readily answered, 'Because you have the great word, and we have not.' It cannot be doubted, but this plea will avail for millions of modern Heathen. Inasmuch, as to them little is given, of them little will

be required. As to the ancient Heathen, millions of them were savages. No more will be required of them, than living up to the light they had. But many of them, especially amongst civilized nations, we have great reason to hope, although they lived amongst Heathen, were quite of another spirit, being taught of God, by his inward voice, all the essentials of true religion. Yea, and so was that Mahommedan Arabian, who, a century ago, wrote the life of Hai Ebn Yokdham. The story may be feigned, but it contains all the principles of pure religion." *Wesley's Sermons.* N. B. This life was translated by Simon Ockley, and published 1708, and exhibits a very curious account of Arabian philosophy. For many interesting anecdotes of Heathens, see "An Account of Two Danish Missionaries," (Ziegenbalgh and Plutscho), published by "The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel." London, 8vo. 1718.

"The great scheme of our redemption in Christ, was laid before the world began; and if we take the account which itself gives of its designs, we shall find the greatest of its benefits extended to all mankind; viz. the covenant for restoring the whole posterity of Adam to that immortality which he had forfeited, &c. No doubt, there are great advantages, and sure promises belonging to those who have been so happy as to be included in the Christian covenant, and hold it in faith and purity. But let us not exclude others from the mercies of their common Lord, or murmur at the good man of the house, if these also receive every man his penny," &c. *Bp. Law's Theory of Religion*, p. 194, 195.

"The Heathen, who had no assurance, and but slight expectations of a future state, yet through an exalted piety sacrificed the enjoyments of life; was recommended to the Deity on grounds that no Jew, or Christian can be. And again, these would have allowances, to which persons under a clearer light could have no claim. Heathens, Jews, and Christians will be tried by their conformity to the will of God, so far as they knew it." *Mainwaring's Sermons*, p. 99.

"All men have it in their power to do all that God requires at their hands. All those who, on the whole, and in the main, act suitably to their abilities and capacities, have a secret influence of God to help them so far as is needful. All such persons have Jesus Christ for their Redeemer, though he never was revealed to them," &c. *Jortin's Sermons*, vol. i. p. 265.

"It is not to be expected, that the writers of the New Testament should say much concerning the possibility of serving God, without the knowledge of Christianity; for their business was to recommend it, as a gift of the utmost importance, to press men to accept it, and to show them the fatal consequences of rejecting it. But concerning the Gentiles, who never heard the Gospel, and who had no revealed law, St. Paul says of them, that they sometimes did, by nature and conscience, the things contained in the law; and by so doing, performed an acceptable duty; and, consequently, they were not without those assistances, external or internal, which may save a man from final destruction. And the ancient Christians, with a general consent, speak favourably of the wise and good Gentiles, who made a proper use of their reason; and say,

that the Gospel, in one sense, was as old as mankind, and that its main duties had been ever practised by the lover of truth and virtue.

" ' God is no respecter of persons; but, in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, shall be accepted with him.' So long, then, as we be careful to remember and acknowledge, that Christ is the only Redeemer by whom we have access to the Divine mercy and favour, and that there is no other name under heaven given to men, by which they may be saved; we may fairly allow to these words an extensive signification, and we may be permitted to say, that God, the Universal Father of all, hath put it in the power of every man who comes into the world, to perform his duty; that He requires no more than he has given; that He will extend his mercy to all those who act a sober and rational part to the best of their understanding and ability, and who seek Christ as a Saviour, though they never had the opportunity and happiness of knowing him." vol. iii. p. 360, 361.

" If, in any age or nation of the earth, any of the race of Adam have, at the call of God, howsoever addressed to them, turned unto him, and repented of their way, that repentance has been accepted only in consequence of the sacrifice and death of Christ; and thus will it be found ultimately true, ' that there is no other name under heaven by which we may be saved.' And, surely, if it be undeniable, that the most enlightened or purified Jew, or Christian, if the patriarchs and prophets, the apostles and evangelists, cannot be saved by their own works or merits, but by the mediation of Christ alone, it were inconsistent

and incredible to suppose, that those who were less enlightened and purified, those who lived 'in that ignorance that God winked at,' but who, though not 'under the (revealed) law, were a law unto themselves; the works of the law being written in their hearts;' it cannot be conceived, that the Divine justice should accept of them for their own merits, or their own righteousness. If, then, there be any possibility of salvation for these, it is, assuredly, in consequence of the interposition of Christ; and to suppose there is no possibility of salvation to any, who shall not have lived under the Jewish or Christian covenants, but that all the rest of mankind, without exception, shall inevitably perish, is to deny 'that tender mercy of God which is over all his works.'" *Dean Graves on the Calvinistic Controversy*, p. 415.

"It is not declared in Scripture, that it is necessary all men should be made acquainted with the circumstances of the redemption, to qualify them for a participation in its blessings. Millions have partaken of the corruption through Adam, in different ages and degrees, without knowing the source of their corruption. And millions may have partaken of redemption through Christ, in equally different ages and degrees, notwithstanding their ignorance of him in this life. God, we are expressly told, 'is the Saviour of all men, though especially of those who believe.'" *Eveleigh's Bamp. Lect.* p. 11.

"It is every way consistent with the nature of God, who is the merciful Father of all men, to presume, that, however it has pleased his providence to exclude the Heathen of every age from the light of the Gospel,

they will find a saving interest in the death of Christ, provided they have walked after the light which shone on their hearts, though inferior, and less resplendent. They were included in the misfortune of the first Adam, and why should they be prohibited the benefits of the second? What! because they did not believe in Him of whom they had never heard? No such thing. The influence of the redemption by the one, is surely as extensive as the effects of the other's transgression; and since the promise was given to Adam, and, in him, to his posterity, they have as fair a right to claim it, as the Jews or Christians." *Tatham's Discourses*, p. 59.

Bishop Butler, in his admirable chapter "On the Want of Universality in Revelation," having reviewed its different degrees of evidence, in different ages, thus sums up his opinion: "If we put the case, that, for the present, it was intended that the revelation should be no more than a light, in the midst of a world greatly overspread with ignorance and darkness; that certain glimmerings of this light extend in all directions to remote distances, in such a manner, as those who really partook of it should not discern from whence it originally came; that some, in a nearer situation, should have its light obscured, and in different ways and degrees intercepted; that others should be placed within its clearer influences, and be more enlivened, cheered, and directed by it, and that even to these it should be no more, 'than light shining in a dark place;' all this would be perfectly uniform and of a piece with the conduct of providence in the distribution of its other blessings. If the fact of the case really

were, that some have really received no light at all from the Scriptures, as many ages and countries in the Heathen world; that others, though they have by means of it, had essential and internal religion enforced on their consciences, yet have never had the genuine Scripture revelation, with its real evidences, proposed to their consideration—and the ancient Persians and modern Mahometans may possibly be instances of people in a situation somewhat like to this—that others, though they have had the Scriptures laid before them as of divine revelation, yet have had it with the system and evidence of Christianity so interpolated, (the system so corrupted, the evidence so blended with false miracles,) as to leave the mind in the utmost darkness and uncertainty about the whole; which may be the state of some thoughtful men in most of those nations who call themselves Christian: and lastly, that others have had Christianity offered to them in its genuine simplicity, and with its proper evidence, as persons in countries and churches of civil and Christian liberty; but, however, that even these persons are left in great ignorance in many respects, and have, by no means, light afforded them enough to satisfy their curiosity, but only to regulate their life; to teach them their duty, and encourage them in the careful discharge of it:—I say, if we were to suppose this somewhat of a general true account of the degrees of moral and religious light and evidence which were intended to be offered to mankind, there would be nothing, in all such varieties, but may be paralleled by manifest analogies in Providence. Nor is there any

thing shocking in all this, if we would only keep in mind that every one shall be impartially dealt with," &c. *Bp. Butler's Analogy*, p. 219.

The following quotations from the earlier Fathers, which I have selected from the Bishop of Winchester's "Refutation of Calvinism," may be acceptable to some of my readers, as shewing their sentiments, with respect to our argument for the salvability of the Heathen.

"Let us look stedfastly at the blood of Christ, and see how precious it is in the sight of God, which being shed for our salvation, has obtained the grace of repentance for all the world. Let us search into all ages, and learn that the Lord has in every one given opportunity for repentance, to all such as are willing to come unto him." *Clemens Romanus*, p. 282.

Justin Martyr says, "that all, who before the time of Christ lived agreeably to reason, were Christians; and he particularly mentions Socrates, Heraclitus, Abraham, Ananias, Asarias, Misael, and Elias," p. 295. "The Father of the universe," says the same writer, "was willing that Christ should take the curse of all, for the whole human race," p. 299.

"Christ did not come for those only who believed on him in the time of Tiberius Cæsar, nor did the Father make provision for those only who are now living; but for all those, who from the beginning, according to their virtue in their generation, have both feared and loved God, and have lived justly and piously towards their neighbours, and have wished to see Christ and hear his voice." *Irenæus*, p. 303.

"The Lord Jesus came to save all sinners. It was right that he should show his will even to the ungodly,

and therefore it was right that he should not pass over even him who should betray him." *Ambrose*, p. 377. "As all, before they are born, die in the first Adam; so also all, even those who were born before the coming of Christ, are made alive in the second Adam." *Idem*, p. 412. "It is clear that all men have a natural knowledge of God, and that no one is born without Christ, or without having in himself the seeds of wisdom, of justice, and of the other virtues." *Idem*, p. 412.

"God is not unjust to defraud the righteous of the reward of righteousness, if the sacrament of the divinity and of the humanity of Christ, which was manifest in the flesh, has not been announced to them. 'For how should they believe, who have not heard? and how should they hear without a preacher?'" *Augustine*, p. 446.

"If God lightens every man that cometh into the world, how does it happen that so many have remained without light? For all have not known the worship of Christ. How then does he lighten every man? as far as depends on him. But if some voluntarily shutting the eyes of their understandings, were unwilling to admit the rays of this light, their darkness was not in consequence of the nature of the light, but of the wickedness of those who voluntarily deprive themselves of the gift," &c. *Chrysostom*, p. 489.

"If it be true, that in consequence of Adam's transgression, the whole race received the doom of death; it is manifest, that the righteousness of the Saviour procures life for all men." *Theodoret*, p. 505.

With regard to the opinions of the foreign reformers, they may be thus briefly classed and examined

rated. Luther appears to have been privately in favour of our sentiments; but he did not think it necessary to avow this sentiment as forming a part of his public creed. Zuinglius, Pellican, and the Swiss reformers, were positively on our side. Melancthon may safely be reckoned with us. Grotius, Arminius, with the whole body of the Dutch Remonstrants, are also in our favour. Of this, the authority of Limborch, 'instar omnium,' may be cited as a pledge: "Quæres, An ergo illi, quibus verbum evangelii revelatum non est, salutis esse participes possunt, cum Scriptura dicat, in nullo alio, quam Christo, esse salutem,' Act. iv. 12. eumque 'qui filium non habet, non habere vitam,' 1 Joan. v. 12. quin et absque fide in Christum, nullam 'esse salutem,' Marc. xvi. 16. Joan. iii. 16. Resp. 1. Nemo illa cognoscere tenetur, quæ Deus ipsi non revelavit, aut revelare noluit, Joan. xv. 22, 24. nec ob illius cognitionis carentiam quispiam damnabitur, Rom. ii. 12. 2. Nemo interim salvabitur, nisi per redemptionem in sanguine Christi; quæ sicut profuit illis, qui ante Christum vixerunt, licet eum aut non, aut saltem non nisi obscure admodùm per umbras, ac typos, cognoverunt; ita nihil repugnat ut et imputetur, non vi promissi alicujus divini, sed per immensam gratiam divinam, illis, qui, postquam mundo predicatus est, eum absque suâ culpâ ignorant. Loca citata de illis solis agunt, qui Christum sibi annunciatum per incredulitatem rejiciunt. Illis nulla est salus." *Theolog. Christ.* lib. iv. sect. xiii. p. 328. edit. 1686.

"As to the Heathen, though the light of reason is but dim, yet they who have no better light to walk by, and honestly make use of that light, as the

only guide which God has given them, cannot fail to be mercifully dealt with by infinite justice and goodness. This is the foundation of St. Paul's reasoning upon the state of the Gentile world, that God did *not* then 'leave himself without witness;' the regular returns of the seasons of the year, and the former and latter rain coming at their set times, and blessing them with plentiful harvests, were visible evidences of his providence and goodness. And though, notwithstanding these evidences, they fell into idolatry; yet, because these 'were times of ignorance,' in which they had no other guide, but the light of nature, God 'winked at them,' or bore with them," &c. *Bp. Gibson's Pastoral Letters*, p. 153.

"We are told, 'that God is no respecter of persons; but, in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.' But such declarations must be considered as belonging to those only who were never made acquainted with the Gospel, and still their acceptance will be for the sake of Jesus Christ, who died as a propitiation for the sins of the whole world. The merits of his death are not limited to those who call upon his name; for, 'how shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?' St. Paul by thus shewing that it has been absolutely impossible for a great part of mankind to believe in the Gospel, intimates that their unbelief will not be imputed to them as a fault. He also says, that 'the Gentiles are a law unto themselves;' therefore Gentiles, Jews, and Christians, have all had their re-

spective rules of conduct equally derived from God, by which they will be judged at the last day; and the salvation of the Jew and Gentile will be no less owing to the merits of Christ, than that of the Christian; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, by which we may be saved." *Bishop Tomline on the Eighteenth Article. Elements*, vol. ii. p. 321.

"It is true, one may allow these Heathen (the Greenlanders), in several respects, a preference before corrupt Christians; because they really avoid many vices, not barely through the absence of bad examples, means, and opportunities, or from a blameable self-praise and self-interest; but also from a principle of shame, which shews that they have a notion, though it be obscure, that this and the other thing is wrong or sinful, &c. And undoubtedly it is no small plea in their favour, that being enveloped in utter ignorance of revelation, they are more obedient to the little light of their understandings, than most are to the knowledge they have from the light of the Gospel." *Crantz's Greenland*, vol. i. p. 196.

"A missionary, being once in company of some baptized Greenlanders, expressed his wonder how they could formerly lead such a senseless life, void of all reflection. Upon this, one of them answered as follows: 'It is true we were ignorant Heathen, and knew nothing of a God or a Saviour, and indeed, who should tell of this till you came? But you must not imagine that no Greenlander thinks about these things. I myself have often thought a kajak (a boat), with all its tackle and implements, does not grow into existence of

itself, but must be made by the labour and ingenuity of man, and one that does not understand it, would directly spoil it. Now, the meanest bird has far more skill displayed in its structure than the best kajak, and no man can make a bird. But there is a still greater art shewn in the formation of a man, than of any other creature. Who was it that made him? I bethought me, he proceeded from his parents, and they from their parents. But some must have been the first parents. Whence did they come? Common report informs me they grew out of the earth. But if so, why does it not still happen that men grow out of the earth? And from whence did this same earth itself, the sea, the sun and the moon, and the stars, arise into existence? Certainly there must be some Being who made all these things, a Being that always was, and never can cease to be. He must be inexpressibly more mighty, knowing, and wise, than the wisest man. He must be very good too, because every thing that he has made is good, useful, and necessary for us. Ah! did I but know him, how would I love him and honour him! But who has seen him? Who has ever conversed with him? None of us poor men. Yet there may be men, too, that know something about him. O could I but speak with such! Therefore (said he) as soon as I heard you speak of this great Being, I believed it directly with all my heart, because I had so long desired to hear it.'

"This testimony was confirmed by others, with more or fewer circumstances. As for instance, they superadded—'A man is made quite different from the beasts.

The brutes have no understandings, but they serve for food for each other, and all for the use of man. But man has an intelligent soul, is subject to no creature in the world, and yet is afraid of the future state. Who is it that he is afraid of there? There must be a great Spirit that has dominion over us. O did we but know him. O had we but him for our friend!' " p. 198, 199.

The value of this quotation requires no comment; it is perhaps the most curious and genuine piece of Pagan reasoning now extant, and, as such, it is of great importance to my argument.

Without troubling the reader with any further quotations, I would refer him generally to the admirable appendix of Archbishop Laurence's Lectures for information on this subject; also, to the learned, but ill-digested, work of John Goodwin; entitled, " Redemption Redeemed;" to the Bishop of Winchester's Elements of Christian Theology, especially his Exposition of the eighteenth Article. There is also a very curious and learned work, entitled, " Tobiæ Pfanneri Systema Theologiæ Gentilis Purioris" (Basil, 1679.) to which there is an appendix, " De salute Gentilium," which is well worthy of consultation. I have not been able to meet with the work by Eberhard, a Swedish divine, " An Enquiry into the Doctrine respecting the Salvation of the Heathen;" and, therefore, can say nothing of its merits.

With regard to those who have questioned or denied this doctrine, I would, by no means, wish to speak disrespectfully of their learning, talents, or intentions. But if any man can read the arguments of Calvin or

Turretin, of Ridgley, or of Gill, on the subject of the Heathen, and not feel the strongest repugnance to their conclusions, I envy not that man's religion or philanthropy.

Perhaps the baleful influence of Calvinism, even on a mind of no common piety, and on talents of no common excellence, cannot be more strikingly exemplified, than by referring to the Exposition of Bishop Beveridge on the eighteenth Article, in which, after declaring his concurrence with the harshest sentiments of Augustine and Fulgentius, he thus sums up the decision:—" Though many Christians shall not go into heaven, yet none but Christians can go to heaven. Many that profess the name of Christ may not be saved, yet all who deny Christ are certain to be damned; for it is by Christ, and by Christ only, that we are, or can be saved."

Now, it is plain, that this view of the question has no connexion with our statement for the salvability of Heathen nations. First, We have said nothing about those who *deny* Christ, but only as to those who are *ignorant* of him. Secondly, We have neither asserted nor insinuated, that any could be saved *independently*, of his merits; the whole strength of our argument, being founded on the supposition, that the merits of Christ are universal, and equivalent to the sins of the whole world. Thirdly, It should be decidedly understood, that this work is offered as an argument for the *salvability of all men*, and not as a presumptuous enquiry concerning the *number of those who shall be saved.*

But, that my reader may now clearly understand the dreadful tenets (horresco referens) of the authors, to whom Bishop Beveridge has referred, I will furnish him with the originals.

" Firmissimè tene, et nullatenus dubites, parvulos, sive in utris matrum vivere incipiunt, et ibi moriuntur; sive cum de matribus nati, sine sacramento sancti baptismatis, de hoc seculo transiunt, ignis æterni sempiterno supplicio puniendos. *Fulgentius.*

" Firmissimè tene, et nullatenus dubites, non solùm omnes Paganos, sed etiam omnes Judæos, hereticos, atque schismaticos, qui, extra ecclesiam Catholicam, præsentem finierunt vitam, in ignem æternum ituros, qui præparatus est diabolo et angelis ejus. *Augustin. de fide ad Petrum Diaconum.*

ADDENDA.

In the posthumous works of Dr. T. Balguy, lately published, this subject is treated at large, and he thus sums up his opinion:—I conclude, that an honest Heathen has the same title to salvation, which we have ourselves; with this only difference, that *he knows it not.* If, on this account, it be improper to say, that God has *promised* him salvation, yet his right is equally strong in itself, being founded on the express declarations of Him 'who cannot lie.' *Enquiry concerning Faith*, sect. iii.

Amongst the "Resolves of Owen Feltham," there is a short essay on "the Salvation of the Heathen," from which I take the following extracts. "I have met with some that will not, by any means, allow that a Heathen may be saved. I know not that they ever read the book of life and death, or were admitted to the counsel of the Most High; otherwise, than by collection arising from sound principles, and the tender sense of human nature. Indeed, I know not how to applaud their charity, that will desperately damn such a world of men and the succeeding generations, of so many ages past, and to come. Is it not enough, that we may be admitted to be heirs ourselves, but all our brethren must be disinherited? Nor *can I think* God approves their judgment, who so strictly undertake to limit his mercies, which yet appear to us, not only above, but over all his works," &c. p. 307. "But it will be alleged, from *Acts* iv. "that salvation cannot be had by any other but Christ. For there is no other name given under heaven," &c. "and without *faith in* him, salvation cannot be had; and faith in him they cannot have, because they never heard of him. I admit all but the last, and literally that too. I doubt not, but all to whom the sound of the Gospel has come, are strictly obliged to this—*nominal* Christ is necessary to those that have *nominally* heard of him. Yet who can tie up the spirit of God from illuminating this to their souls, either in this life, or in the very farewell of it?" &c. p. 308. "If any man object, that it is no privilege, then, to be a Christian, I suppose him much mistaken—for as St. Paul answers for the Jews, It is a

chief thing that to them are committed the oracles of God," &c. "They are pre-eminenced before the rest of the world: any man will like his title better, who is *declared* an heir; than his, who is but in a *capacity of adoption*," &c. p. 312. The whole essay is well worthy of perusal, though it is omitted in the late edition by Mr. Cumming.

APPENDIX II.

CONTAINING

STRICTURES

ON

"*A HISTORY OF THE WORK OF REDEMPTION,*" *&c.*

BY JONATHAN EDWARDS.

APPENDIX.

No. II.

As a contrast to the evidence which has been adduced from the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, on the principles of this work, in favour of the salvability of the Heathen; I shall now lay before the reader a short analysis of Jonathan Edwards' "History of Redemption," from which he will be enabled to determine on which side the weight of Scriptural authority preponderates.

This work was originally drawn up by Dr. Edwards in the form of sermons, but is now "altered to that of a continued treatise by John Erskine, D.D." As such, it constitutes, I believe, one of the most popular manuals of Calvinistic Theology, and is peculiarly adapted for contrast with our argument, as it so nearly corresponds in its formal divisions, whilst it totally differs in its object and tendency.

The author commences with the assertion, that "the work of redemption is a work that God carries on from the fall of man to the end of the world." But, instead of deducing from the universality of the remedy from the universality of the disease, or from the compass of its history; he limits the design, to restoring

"all the ruins of the fall, *so far as concerns the elect part of the world*," p. 10. "Another great design," he adds, "of God in the work of redemption, was to gather together in one all things in Christ, in heaven and in earth, *i. e. all elect creatures;* to bring all elect creatures in heaven and in earth, to an union one to another," &c. p. 12. I shall willingly leave the reader to decide, whether this account, or our own, best accords with the simplicity of Scripture, as recorded in Genesis. See Sect. 1, 2.

The first division of Dr. Edwards corresponds to that which we have adopted, "extending from the fall to the flood." "It is manifest," he observes, "that Christ began to exercise the office of Mediator between God and man, as soon as man fell, because mercy began to be exercised towards man immediately," p. 15. From such an observation, it might have been supposed, that he would have extended the Mediatorial office of Christ towards *all* mankind; but he expressly confines its benefits to "the care of the church of the elect." So likewise, when he remarks, that the Gospel was first preached on the earth in the words, 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman,' &c. it might have been concluded, that he would have extended its benefits towards the *whole human race;* whereas he confines himself to the inference, "that God would subdue his *enemies* under the feet of his Son," p. 16.

In these and subsequent examples, it should be remembered, that our facts and premises being exactly the same, we differ only as to the nature of the conclusions. I would request of my reader, therefore,

nothing more, than a fair and impartial collation of our respective reasoning.

The observations of Dr. Edwards, on the divine origin of sacrifice, are very judicious, and though the nature of my work has not led me to advert to this topic, I beg leave to subscribe to his sentiments, "The institution of sacrifice was a great thing done towards preparing the way for Christ's coming, and working out the Redemption. For the sacrifices of the Old Testament were the main of all the Old Testament types of Christ, and his redemption, and it tended to establish in the minds of God's visible church, the necessity of a propitiatory sacrifice, in order to the Deity's being satisfied for sin, and so prepared the way for the reception of the glorious Gospel, which reveals the great sacrifice in the visible church; and *not only so, but through the world of mankind,*" &c. "*By this means all the nations of the world had their minds possessed with this notion, that an atonement for sin was necessary; and a way was made for the more readily receiving the doctrine of the Gospel, which teaches us the atonement and sacrifice of Christ,*" &c. p. 21. Nothing can be more satisfactory than these observations, and they are quite in unison with those which I have formerly adduced on this subject. See *Connection of Natural and Revealed Theology,* Sect. xix. xxv. part 1. and Sect. xx. xxii. part 2. Nor, are they less in harmony with the doctrine of the salvability of all nations, through the atoning sacrifice of Christ. Yet nothing of this kind is deduced by Dr. Edwards. Instead of representing the whole world, as brought into a state of reconciliation

or salvability through the Mediatorial scheme of the Gospel, he confines it to a point of individual and personal privilege. Thus he represents "Adam and Eve, as being the first fruits of Christ's redemption, p. 32. And Abel, as the first soul that went to heaven through Christ," p. 23. These facts may be correct, but from this style of expression, we might suppose, that each act of redemption was personal and peculiar, and not in consequence of the general system of mercy to penitent sinners *. He then notices

* It may be here proper to observe, that most of the prejudice and opposition which has arisen against the doctrine of Heathen salvability, may be traced to the rash and presumptuous manner in which some of the ancient fathers and schoolmen have treated this subject. Many of them, instead of connecting this doctrine with the scheme of redemption through Christ, have represented reason and philosophy as being to them a sufficient and independent substitute for faith and repentance. Amongst these, may be numbered Justin Martyr, Clemens Alexandrinus, Chrysostom, and Hilary, with a host of Romish theologians. Others, if *possible*, still more rash, have disputed and dogmatized about the salvation of Heathen *individuals*. Even Luther is not quite free from this imputation, with respect to Cicero: and to what an extent it has been carried, may be conceived from a treatise having been actually published, "De salute Aristotelis!" See Bayle's *Dict. Artic. Aristotle.* See also *Donn's Sermons.* p. 261. 763.

As the principles of the present work are altogether opposite to such rash and unscriptural theories, I trust, that no attempt will be made to confound my argument with theirs. The evidence which I have adduced, being altogether scriptural, has no connection with any speculative reasoning. It is an endeavour to shew, that the salvability of the Heathen forms a necessary and essential part of the doctrine of universal redemption, and therefore is totally opposite to the assertions, "Ratio, pro fide, Græcis et Barbaris;" "Philosophia, per se, justificavit Græcos," &c. And as to the method of disputing, whether Socrates, or Cicero, Aris-

the event which took place in the days of Enos, "Then began *men* to call on the name of the Lord," p. 24, a text which has puzzled the ingenuity of commentators, but by which Dr. Edwards would understand a more abundant pouring out of the spirit on some favoured *individuals*; an interpretation for which there is not the smallest authority in the original.

The last particular which I shall notice in this portion of the history, relates to his representation of *the church before the flood*. "He confines the members of this church (and none could be saved out of it) to the family of Seth, and we cannot reasonably suppose," he says, "that Seth's posterity were one fiftieth part of the world," p. 29. These also fell away, so that, "the church" was reduced to a single family! Whether the history of Moses countenances these exclusive representations, may be fairly doubted; but that it does not warrant the Calvinistic conclusions of this writer, there can be no question. Let me again request the reader to take his Bible, and to judge between us. See part i. Sect. vi.

We proceed to the Second Part of Dr. Edwards's

totle, or Heraclitus, were saved *individually*; we can regard it, as nothing better, than the Calvinistic doctrine of personal election, applied to Heathen philosophers; and as we utterly disapprove of this presumptuous method, when applied to *believers*, we cannot be supposed to admire it, with regard to *others*. But the rule we adopt is one of universal application, and it has the stamp of Bishop Taylor's authority: "No man can be saved, unless he knows saving truth; but every man *may* be saved, unless it be his own fault, and therefore, there is to every man revealed so much of truth, as is necessary to his salvation." *Ductor Dubitant.* Book iv. Sect. 2. Rule v.

History, which extends from the flood to the call of Moses. "The flood," he says, "was only a destruction of the seed of the serpent, in the midst of their most violent rage against the seed of the woman; and thus delivering the seed of the woman, when in utmost peril by them," p. 32. "The giants that were in those days, in all likelihood, got themselves their renown by their great exploits against heaven, and against Christ and his Church, the remaining sons of God that had not corrupted themselves." Is it possible to read such expositions of Scripture, without a feeling of sorrow and shame that they should ever have been written?

He admits the reason why the promise was given to Noah, that God would not destroy the earth any more by a flood, was this,—"that the grant of authority to Noah was founded on the covenant of grace," p. 35. But if so, the covenant of grace, it might have been inferred, was the covenant given to all Noah's posterity. Here, also, is an example of the same premises, from which are deduced quite opposite conclusions. Sect. viii.

"The dispersion of the nations, and the division of the earth amongst its inhabitants, was done," he remarks, "to suit the grand design of redemption," p. 37. yet he immediately after confines it to the benefit of "the land of Canaan." "They were so placed, the bounds of their habitations so limited round the land of Canaan, the place laid out for the habitation of God's people, as most suited the design of propagating the Gospel amongst them." *Deut.* xxxii. 8. "The land of Canaan was the most conveniently situated of any

place in the world for the purpose of spreading the light of the Gospel thence amongst the nations in general. The inhabited world was chiefly in the Roman empire in the times immediately after Christ, which was in the countries round about Jerusalem, and so properly situated for the purpose of diffusing the light of the Gospel amongst them from that place. The devil seeing the advantage of this situation of the nations for promoting the great work of redemption, and the disadvantage of it with respect to the interests of his kingdom, afterwards led away many nations into the remotest parts of the world, to that end, to get them out of the way of the Gospel. Thus, he led some into America, and others into northern cold regions, that are almost inaccessible," p. 37.

Upon this singular passage, which for absurdity and extravagance can scarcely be equalled, I beg leave to make the following observations:—*First*, That the dispersion of the nations is represented in Scripture as the immediate work and design of God; and that so far from confining them to the vicinity of Canaan (which, considering their number and increase, would have been utterly impracticable), we are expressly informed, that they were dispersed "*over the face of the earth*, and *that of these the whole earth was overspread.*" *Secondly*, That the confusion of languages was clearly designed to *promote* this dispersion, and to prevent their permanent intercommunity with each other. *Thirdly*, That to represent *the devil* as subverting the designs of Providence, is to overturn the Divine omnipotence and supremacy. *Fourthly*, That, even if the devil had defeated the intentions of

Providence, still these nations ought not to have been punished for that ignorance which they could not avoid. Upon the whole, I am quite content, that the point at issue, as it concerns the Heathen, should be tried by our respective views of this single question: Whether God, or the devil, was the author of that variety of manners, and languages, and of that diversity of tribes and nations, from which the gradations of human knowledge and ignorance have arisen respecting revelation. Let this be taken as the "experimentum crucis" of the argument for the salvability of Heathen nations. *See Sect.* viii. ix. x.

With respect to the call of Abraham, it is properly observed, that it was given to uphold the knowledge of the true God, and to carry forward the design of Christ's redemption; but there is no authority for viewing it, as the casting off and exclusion of other nations. Nor is there any evidence in Scripture to shew, that the neighbouring nations sought to destroy Abraham and the other Patriarchs; but, on the contrary, we have shewn, that they lived on terms of friendship and hospitality with their contemporaries. Sect. xviii.

The renewal of God's covenant with Isaac and Jacob was plainly designed to keep up their patriarchal faith, and to preserve them from the contagion of surrounding idolatries. But Dr. Edwards views it, as if they had been living just on the threshold of Christianity. "Thus the covenant of God was now often renewed, much oftener than it had been before. The light of the Gospel now began to shine much brighter, as the time drew nearer that it should come," p. 49. This is making short work of chronology, when we remember

that there was still a period of more than 1700 years before the Christian era!

Having noticed the celebrated prediction of Jacob, *Gen.* xlix. 10. "And unto him shall the gathering of the nations be," *(which we might well have made a distinct section in relation to our argument;)* he observes, that "even in this miserable, corrupt, and dark time, God had still a people amongst the Israelites. The parents of Moses were the true servants of God, as we learn by *Heb.* xi. 23. How miserable must be that theology, which confines the number of the saved to those only who are *individually* mentioned in Scripture; and how different *might* have been the inference. If the parents of Moses are commended only for discharging a *parental* duty, who can doubt that the divine mercy appreciates the *smallest* act of piety and virtue?

The next division of Dr. Edwards comprises the Jewish economy, which he commences by affirming, "That as the Israelites were now separated to be God's peculiar people, so *all* other people on the face of the whole earth were *wholly* rejected, and given over to heathenism," p. 55. And this was permitted, according to this writer, "that Christ's salvation of the world of mankind might become the more sensible," p. 54. He observes, "that it was the will of God, that the whole world, Jews and Gentiles, should be concluded in visible and professed unbelief, that so God's mercy and Christ's salvation *to them all* might be visible and sensible," p. 55. From such expressions, it might have been supposed, he would have admitted the salvability of all these Gentile nations, as well as of the Jews. But he deduces no such consequence. These

ages of darkness and impenitence were designed only to show, " that mankind were utterly insufficient to deliver themselves from this darkness and idolatry," p. 50. This surely was a very costly and unfeeling method of evincing the extent of human weakness. But the same effect could have been shown, on our hypothesis, without this destruction of countless generations.

When the Israelites were brought out of Egypt, God inflicted such plagues on the Egyptians as obliged them at length to let his people go. This was plainly intended only as the means unto the end; but Dr. Edwards represents it, as done out of hatred and ill-will towards Pharaoh and his people. " *There was a glorious* triumph over earth and hell in that deliverance," &c. p. 53. But we have shewn at large, that whilst God was rescuing his people from captivity, he was also desirous of sparing and improving the Egyptians. See *Exod.* xxxii. 12. *Deut.* ix. 27, 28. From these and other passages, it is apparent that Moses felt much tenderness towards the Egyptians, (and when it is considered that he had married Jethro's daughter, this is not very extraordinary), and that he, by no means, wished to aggravate their punishment. Such passages are in direct contradiction to the sentiments of those writers, who represent God, as hardening Pharaoh's heart, to bring about his destruction, and the general destruction of the Egyptian nation. See Sect. xvii.

It is curious to observe, how eagerly Dr. Edwards and writers of a similar description, adapt every circumstance to their peculiar theory. Thus, even the peaceful sounds of the Gospel are typified, according to this

author, by thedestruction of the Canaanites: and the fall of Jericho is made symptomatic of "the preaching of Gospel Ministers," p. 67. After this, I find nothing relating to our argument, till the period of the Babylonish empire. "There were three great and general overturnings of the world to come after this, before Christ came. The first, by the Persians; the second, by the Grecians; and the third, by the Romans," p. 107. But, instead of connecting these political revolutions with the moral and spiritual welfare of mankind, Dr. Edwards represents them as the mere work of the devil! "God suffered the devil to do his utmost, and to establish his interest by setting up the greatest and most glorious kingdoms in the world, before the despised Jesus overthrew him and his empire," p. 109. This is a curious method of connecting sacred with profane history. Even, when he adverts to the various dispersions of the Jews amongst the Heathen, he does not associate them with any benefits to those who led them away captive. Whilst he admits, that it had a beneficial influence on the ultimate success of the Gospel, and on the preaching of the apostles, he never regards it, as having any beneficial influence on contemporary generations. Thus when he alludes to Cyrus, Darius, or Artaxerxes, as fulfilling the divine commands, he does not speak, as if they or their subjects derived any moral or religious advantages. "It was remarkable, that the hearts of Heathen Princes should be so inclined. It was the effect of his power, who hath the hearts of kings in his hands, and turneth them wheresoever he will, and it was a remarkable instance of his favour towards his people," p. 121.

It is characteristic of all such writers, that, when

they relate such extraordinary facts, they view them, not in their effects on those who were *contemporary* with them, but merely in their *final* relation to what might take place some ages afterwards. Thus the introduction of the Greek language, and the translation of the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, is viewed by Dr. Edwards, not with any reference to those who lived in the age of the Ptolemies, nor to its general effect on the inhabitants of the east; but merely, as it facilitated the preaching of the Gospel in the age of the apostles, p. 127. I request my reader to contrast our view of the Jewish economy, and more especially of its latter period, with such unfeeling and despotic reflections. Sect. xxix—xlvi.

When we arrive at the close of this period, our author makes the following observation; "God did two things to prepare the way for Christ's coming, wherein he took a contrary method to that which human wisdom would have taken. He brought his own visible people very low, and made them weak; but, *the Heathen, that were his enemies,* he exalted to the greatest height, for the more glorious triumph of the cross of Christ. With a small number, in their greatest weakness, he conquered his enemies in their greatest glory. Thus Christ triumphed over principalities and powers in his cross," p. 133. All this is very wonderful and unaccountable, on the principle of Dr. Edwards; but it is perfectly reasonable and compatible with our argument. It is not true, that the Heathen were viewed by God *as his enemies;* if so, he must have hated all mankind, except the Jews. Nor is it true, that the devil had usurped the power and prerogatives of God's providence. Nor is it at all

wonderful, that, when the temporary scaffolding of the Jewish economy was to be overthrown, the power of the Gentiles should be augmented, in the very same proportion, as the power of the Jews was diminished. Such misconceptions shew, that Dr. Edwards has altogether mistaken the designs and intentions of the Jewish polity; whilst they throw an additional lustre on every argument for the salvability of Heathen nations.

We have now arrived at that part of Dr. Edwards's History of Redemption, which comprises the period of Christ's stay upon earth. He begins by shewing the necessity of Christ's taking our nature upon him to act as our Mediator; but, by assuming that nature, he became equally related to *all* mankind; and therefore, it is a direct argument in favour of universal redemption. The same reasoning applies to his subsequent reflections, and particularly to the last, "*that the same world which was the stage of man's fall and ruin, should also be the stage of his redemption.*" p. 146. If so, that stage is the stage of *the world.* His second head, which relates "to the fulness of time" at which the incarnation took place, is also far better adapted to a scheme, which embraces the whole world, than any which is confined to a part. "There could not have been," as he observes, "so fit a time for Christ to come after the flood, before Moses' time; for till then, mankind was not so universally apostatized from the true God; they were not universally fallen into Heathenish darkness," &c. p. 147. All this is undoubtedly true; but it is equally true, on the hypothesis of the salvability of the Gentile world, and it comes with a far better grace, than on the supposition,

that the remedy was delayed for so many ages, without providing for the intermediate and successive wants of mankind. "It pleased God," says this author, "that the curse '*dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return*,' should have its full accomplishment and be executed, in its greatest degree, on mankind before the Redeemer came to purchase everlasting life for man," p. 147. Alas! that one who could adduce such a comprehensive argument, should not perceive, that it ought to have led to a conclusion no less comprehensive.

Thirdly, he dwells on the greatness and importance of the incarnation, "When Christ was born, the greatest person was born, that ever was, or ever will be born," p. 149. But how much greater does Christ appear, as the Saviour of all men, than as merely the Saviour of some elect Christians! and how much more befitting *the Creator* of the world to become its Redeemer, than to die only for a small portion of his creatures. The same observation applies to the ensuing observation, "that the birth of Christ was noticed in heaven, 'when the morning stars sang together, and all the host of God shouted for joy,' and, as they sang praises then, so they do now, on this much greater occasion, of the birth of the Son of God, *who is the Creator of the world*," p. 150. But as the creation was the creation of all men, so, to make this argument good, the redemption should have been equally universal; and even so it was proclaimed by the heavenly host. "Glory to God, peace upon earth, and goodwill towards men." See Sect. xlvii. xlviii.

Again, he says, "that notice was taken of it by the

Gentiles, which appears in the wise men of the east; great part of the universe does, as it were, take a joyful notice of the incarnation of Christ, heaven took notice of it, and its inhabitants sung with joy. The lower world, *the world of mankind*, does also take notice of it, in both parts of it, *Jews and Gentiles*," p. 151. All this we have adduced, as forming an integral portion of *our* argument for the salvability of the Heathen; and we are content to let any unprejudiced reader decide, whether we are not fairly entitled to *all* its influence. Sect. xlix.

He proceeds to observe, "that the satisfaction of Christ consists in his answering the demands of the law on man, which were consequent on a breach of the law. These were answered by his suffering the penalty of the law," &c. p. 153. But whatever be the force of this reasoning, it applies, surely, far more fully to a scheme, which embraces the whole, than that which is confined to a part. How much grander is it to view the "one oblation of Christ upon the cross, as a perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual;" (Artic. xxxi.) than to state it, in the special pleadings of this writer. "All that Christ did in his state of humiliation, which had the nature of obedience, or moral virtue or goodness in it, in one respect or another, had the nature of merit, and was part of the price, with which he purchased happiness *for the elect*." p. 154.

Still dwelling on Christ's righteousness, he observes, "that every command which Christ obeyed, may be reduced to that great and everlasting law of God, which is contained in the covenant of works; that

eternal will of right, which God had established between him and mankind. Christ came into the world to fulfil and answer the covenant of works; that is, the covenant which is to stand for ever, as the rule of judgment; the covenant which we had broken, and the covenant which must be fulfilled," p. 156. I could be content again to rest the whole argument on these statements, and on the conclusions to which they naturally lead. If *all* men were originally included under the covenant of works, and if Christ came to take that covenant on himself, then he came to rescue *all* from the effects of their delinquency. And it is thus Scripture represents it:—" As by the one man's disobedience, many" *(the many)* " were made sinners; so by the obedience of one, shall many" *(the many)* " be made righteous." *Rom.* v. 19. See Sect. lxxxv.

From these, and several of the subsequent reasonings of Dr. Edwards, the superior evidence for Universal Redemption may be clearly discerned. There can be no stronger proof of any triumph, than to find our adversary's premises conducting us to the very conclusion which we advocate against him. I could be content to maintain the cause of the Heathen, on the acknowledged doctrines of Calvinism, *so far as it is built on evangelical principles;* and to demonstrate the credibility of this argument from the beauty and consistence which it brings to every Gospel motive. Thus, the subsequent reasoning of Edwards, respecting the perfection and infinity of Christ's righteousness, becomes far more solid and intelligible if applied to the scheme of Universal Redemption, than to that of any partial salvation. So, likewise, his observation on the

greatness and extent of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. "Herein," says Edwards, "he was the antitype of *all* that had been done by *all* the priests, in *all* their sacrifices and offerings from the beginning of the world," p. 164. How literally true on our hypothesis! How partially true on the principles of Calvinism!

"There are some particular virtues," he remarks, "which sinful men may have, which we have not in Christ; not from any want or defect of virtue, but because his virtue was perfect, and without defect. Such is the virtue of repentance, and brokenness of heart for sin, and mortification, and denying lust," p. 164. Such observations, it should be remembered, apply to *all* men; to virtuous Heathen, as well as to the members of the Christian Church. And, it is probable, that in the sight of God, "who seeth not as man seeth," that good men, that is, all who act according to the light which they enjoy, whether Christians or Heathen, approximate far more nearly to each other than we are willing to allow. South observes, "that the universal light, which we usually term the light of nature, may also rightly be termed the light of the Spirit. It is called the light of nature, because of its general inherence in all men. 'It enlightens every man that cometh into the world.' But, it is the light of the Spirit, in respect of the Spirit's efficiency, in that it is the producing cause of it, as it is of every good and perfect gift." And he adds, "that faint and weak as this light is, it is all that the Heathen had, and that by this light they shall be judged." *Sermons*, vol. xi. p. 237.

When Dr. Edwards afterwards enlarges on the character of Christ, and on his "meekness and love,"

&c. it is impossible not to perceive how much all these observations would gain on the principles of Universal Redemption, and how much they are contracted by his own theory. "What a spirit of forgiveness," he exclaims, "did he exhibit! so that he fervently and *effectually* prayed for their forgiveness, when they were in the highest act of provocation which they ever perpetrated; viz. nailing him to the cross:—'Father, forgive them, they know not what they do,'" p. 167. Is it not strange that we should have appealed to the same facts for the very purpose of drawing opposite conclusions? I was certainly not aware of Edwards's mode of reasoning, when I drew up my series of Scriptural evidences, for I had never read his work on Redemption. But I now leave it for my reader to decide, which of us may lay claim to these circumstances of our Saviour's life. See Sect. lxxii.

"Now was accomplished," continues this writer, "the main thing that was pointed at by the various typical institutions of the ceremonial law, and by *all* the typical dispensations, and by *all the sacrifices from the beginning of the world*, &c. "Then was finished *all* that was required to satisfy the threatenings of the law, and *all* that was necessary in order to satisfy Divine justice; then the utmost that vindictive justice demanded, even *the whole debt*, was paid. Then was finished the whole of the purchase of eternal life. And, now, there is no need of any thing more to be done towards the purchase of salvation for sinners; nor has any thing been done since, nor will any thing more be done for ever and ever," p. 174. Without binding myself to approve of some part of this statement, (especially that which speaks of the *vindictive* justice of God)

I would only observe, that upon the principle of Universal Redemption, there is a force, majesty, and sublimity in the doctrines here inculcated, which they can never possess on any other hypothesis. But, I must now proceed to notice what this writer styles the " Improvement."

Whether we regard this subject, then, as matter of " reproof," or of " encouragement," I am content, that the question should be tried by its practical effects, on the minds and opinions of believers. And, first, as " matter of reproof." " God sent his Son into the world, bringing to pass a thing before unknown ; viz. the union of the Divine with the human nature. You have been guilty of slighting the great Saviour," &c. p. 175. Surely all such remonstrances to sinners acquire great force from believing Christ to be the Saviour of *all* men. Secondly, he says, " it affords matter of reproof to those who, instead of believing in Christ, trust in themselves for salvation," &c. But this caution belongs to those, who make the act of Christian faith indispensable to the benefits of Christ's Redemption. Christians are saved, not *by* faith, but *through* faith. It is *by grace* that all men are saved, or put into the condition of salvation; but when the instrument, the method, is mistaken for the cause, there is no little danger, lest we make void the covenant of grace. First, to use Dr. Edwards's own words, " We take on us then to do the work of the great Saviour of the world." Secondly, If we trust " in our own righteousness (or, what is the same thing, in our own *faith*), then, all that Christ did to purchase salvation is in vain," p. 176. Hence, we conclude, that self-righte-

ousness is just as chargeable on those who make *faith*, the exclusive foundation of their hope towards God, as on others who make a boast of their *good works*. If any thing, whether an act of the mind, or of the body, be made *the substitute* for what Christ has done and suffered for us, then so far we must destroy the covenant of grace *.

It is of great importance, that these remarks should be calmly and deliberately considered; for, it is probable, that many who doubt, or deny the salvability of the Heathen, do it from false and mistaken notions concerning the indispensable necessity which they attach to the doctrine of justification by faith. But "genuine faith," as an eminent dissenter of the present day has observed, "when considered as a principle, is characterised, not so much by the particular truths which it embraces, as by its origin, its nature, and its effects. When St. Paul describes the faith, by which the elders obtained a good report, he refers not to the mysteries of the Gospel, but specifies the persuasion, that the worlds were made or created by the word of God, in opposition to the opinion, that they were formed out of pre-existent matter, which universally

* "Cùm igitur dicimus, fide justificamur, non hoc intelligimus, *propter* ipsius dignitatem: sed hæc est sententia, consequi nos remissionem peccatorum et imputationem justitiæ, *per* misericordiam, *propter Christum*. Verùm hæc misericordia non potest accipi, nisi fide," &c. *August. Confess.* de fide, p. 22. "Justificamur gratis ipsius gratiâ, per Redemptionem quæ est in Christo Jesu." *Saxon. Confess.* p. 79. et *Wirtemberg. Confess.* p. 145. "Deus solus nos justificat, et duntaxat propter Christum. Ideò fidei tribuitur justificatio, maximè propter Christum, et non ideò, quia nostrum opus est." *Helvet. Confess.* p. 46.

prevailed in Pagan philosophy. He also enumerates amongst its legitimate objects, the belief, "that God is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." "*And whosoever examines with attention the various examples which he adduces of the operation of that principle, must be convinced, that the idea of a vicarious propitiation is not* absolutely essential *to its nature; however necessary to salvation it has become, in consequence of the clear revelation of that doctrine.*" *Hall's Christian Baptism*, p. 45.

To the narrowness of Edwards, to the sourness of Gill, and to the bitterness of Ridgeley, I am proud to oppose the authority of this profound and eloquent non-conformist. Mr. Hall is a writer who would be an ornament to any Christian community; and I only lament that we cannot number him amongst ourselves. "Cum talis sis," &c. His argument respecting Jewish believers might almost be transferred to our reasoning respecting the more virtuous Heathen. If the justice of these observations be admitted, the situation of Jewish believers will appear to have been far removed from that of Christians; and the Gospel Dispensation will derive a prodigious accession of splendour from the comparison. It will be seen, they were "shut up," to use the language of inspiration, "unto the faith to be revealed;" that their state was comparatively gloomy, though not hopeless; and that they were upheld by general assurances of Divine mercy, confirmed by the acceptance of their offerings, whilst they possessed no clear or distinct conception of the way in which it would be displayed, or by what expedient its exercise could be rendered consistent

with the immutable holiness and justice of the Divine nature. " Ibant obscuri sola sub nocte patentes." p. 44. Leaving these profound observations to be meditated by my reader at his leisure, in connection with our general argument for the salvability of the Heathen; I shall proceed briefly to notice the remaining part of Dr. Edwards's history, so far as it concerns this topic.

" All the dispensations of God's Providence henceforward, even to the consummation of all things, are to give Christ his reward, and fulfil his end, in what he did and suffered upon earth, and to fulfil the joy that was set before him," p. 185. This is undoubtedly true, inasmuch as the kingdom of *this world is* the mediatorial kingdom of Christ. But, " if all things were created by him, and for him, and if he is the head of all things," &c. then, " to see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied," the Heathen should be numbered amongst the objects of his death, and the trophies of his cross, because they have always constituted the great majority of the human race. Sect. xcix.

" The end of God's creating the world was to prepare a kingdom for his Son (who is appointed heir of the world), and that he might have the possession of it, a kingdom which should remain to all eternity," p. 188. But is any kingdom to be enjoyed, only by keeping a small *province* in possession? He afterwards alludes to Christ's coming to judgment. And whom will he come to judge? Is it not all men, of all ages, even those millions of Heathen, whom Edwards represents as having no interest, no connection with Christ? Sect. xciii.

This writer speaks of the kingdom of Christ as ad-

vancing only by small degrees from the "fall of Jerusalem to Constantine, and from Constantine to the fall of Antichrist," p. 192. If taken historically, this may be true; but, as matter of redemption, "his kingdom ruleth over all from the beginning, and his dominion is from generation to generation." Sect. lxxxix.

He then enquires, "why the setting up of Christ's kingdom, after his humiliation, should be so gradual, by so many steps, that are so long in accomplishing; since God could have finished all at once," p. 193. To this he replies, 1st. That it renders the glory of God more visible to his creatures. 2d. That Satan is more gloriously triumphed over. But these are very poor and insufficient arguments, on this author's hypothesis. It is not easy to see how the glory of God can be manifested, by his looking with indifference on the eternal happiness of the greater portion of mankind; nor, in what manner Satan can be triumphed over, by leaving countless generations as his victims. But there are no such difficulties on the supposition, "that every man shall be rewarded according to his works," and that the glory of God shall be manifested hereafter by the salvation of thousands who have never heard the tidings of the Gospel. The argument from the resurrection of Christ also clearly belongs to us, inasmuch as the Heathen shall rise again solely in virtue of him, "who is the resurrection and the life." See Sect. lxxi.

"All nations but the Jews," he says, "and others who had, at one time or another, joined with them, had been rejected from about Moses' time," p. 210. How coolly can such a writer close the gates of mercy on

mankind! But he endeavours to compensate for the loss of past ages, by a very exaggerated account of the conversion of Heathen nations to Christianity. "Men were changed from being Heathenish and brutish, to be children of God; were called out of Satan's darkness into God's marvellous light; and in *almost all countries throughout the known world were assemblies of God's people*," p. 210. Without denying the rapid spread of Christianity on its first promulgation, every one must see, this is a very false and erroneous statement, if it be meant to insinuate, that the Christian Church has, in any age of the world, included even *one fourth* of its whole inhabitants; not to urge, that, on the principles of Calvinism, it is *only a very small part of professing Christians who are esteemed amongst "the elect."* Rari nantes in gurgite vasto.

To what an extent this writer would carry his principle of rejection, may be conjectured, from his considering *all* the Jews as being now individually cut off from salvation, p. 212.; an inference, for which, *I* apprehend, there is not the smallest authority in the New Testament; but which, if admitted, would establish Calvinism in all its consequences. The Jews, it is true, are no longer the peculiar people of God, but they are evidently living under a peculiar Providence, and are reserved for certain special and important purposes, connected with Christianity. They are, then, neither in the state of Christian believers, nor of avowed Infidels, nor of Pagans: but are the unwilling witnesses to the truth of the Gospel. To suppose that they have, "the vail left upon their hearts," only to render them fit

subjects for everlasting punishment, is so horrible, that none but a Supralapsarian could harbour the thought. They will be dealt with, *individually*, according to their deserts; but to conclude that every Jew, who does not embrace Christianity, will be eternally condemned, is an inference which would destroy our trust in the mercy and justice of God.

After the fall of Jerusalem, Dr. Edwards proceeds to shew, "how the success of Christ's purchase" (I presume, he means the Gospel) "was carried on till the destruction of the Heathen empire in the time of Constantine," p. 214. This phrase, the *Heathen empire*, is very obscure and ambiguous. Alas! the same empire even now extends over the greater part of the habitable world!

Notwithstanding many persecutions, the Christian church existed in its greatest purity, during the first three centuries, and before it obtained any secular establishment. Yet this author represents the age of Constantine, as almost like the second advent of Christ. "Christians had no persecutors now to fear. Their persecutors were all now put down," &c. p. 221. "Heathenism was now abolished, the Heathen priests were dispersed and banished," p. 221. "Satan, the prince of darkness, that king and god of the Heathen world, was cast out," p. 222. Whoever remembers the numerous errors and heresies which were then imported into the church, will deem this language very rash and incautious; not to say, that it is speaking of Rome and its neighbourhood, as if the habitable world had been confined to Italy.

Yet he is correct in attributing all the religion that is in the world to the Scriptures; "that hence Christians, Jews, Mahomedans, and Deists originally came by their knowledge of God," p. 224. But how much more appropriate is this sentiment, when combined with the principle of universal salvability. In our view, all men, whether they acknowledge it or not, are indebted to the Gospel, because it has provided all with the means of salvation, by removing the original curse of the fall; but, according to this writer, the great majority are connected with it only as a necessary evil. It is to them, not "the savour of life unto life; but *only* of death unto death." This is their condemnation, not "that light has come into the world, and they loved darkness, rather than light;" but they are condemned, because they have no eyes to see, no ears to hear, and because the light has been absolutely denied them.

After the age of Constantine, Dr. Edwards proceeds to notice the conversion of several Pagan nations, "the Iberians, the Goths, the Burgundians," &c. p. 230. But, when it is considered, what kind of Christianity they embraced, how blended with idolatry and superstition; I apprehend, that on *Calvinistic* principles, there can be no great cause for exultation. With us, every thing remains just and equable; because "every man shall be judged according to that he hath."

His next period extends "from the rise of anti-Christ to the reformation of Luther," p. 130., i. e. during the thousand years of the darkness of the middle

ages. Throughout this long period, though Christianity was professed in this part of the world, yet it was so debased and corrupted, as scarcely to deserve the name. And unless, we suppose that "God winked at *these* times of ignorance," almost as much as he winked at the times of Heathen darkness, how can we believe, that the multitudes, who then lived and died, could participate in the benefits of redemption?

The truth is, that if this rigid and exclusive system were applied to individuals of various countries, talents, habits and modes of thinking, the generality of professing Christians would stand no better chance, than the generality of Heathen. In many ages of the Church, it was scarcely possible, to avoid the taint of heterodoxy; in others, the errors of Popery obscured all the western part of Christendom. But are we to suppose, that no allowance will be made for the faults of involuntary ignorance? We urge, then, only the same equitable treatment for the Heathen, which we must necessarily urge for individuals amongst ourselves; and if we are so severe and bigoted as to deny it to the majority of mankind, I know not how we can expect to obtain it for our more aggravated failings. "With what measure ye mete," &c.

These remarks are wrung from me by the unsparing severity of Dr. Edwards's review of the "ages preceding the Reformation." Allowing this to be "the darkest and most dismal day that ever the Christian church saw," p. 230., yet, surely the cotemporaries of these dark ages were answerable only for the degree of light which they possessed. But, to denounce the poor Chris-

tians of those superstitious times, as universally the children of the devil, is nothing more than the natural consequence of supposing, that all the Heathen will be condemned for their involuntary ignorance of the Gospel.

Nor, in fact, according to these unfeeling sentiments, can we have gained much even by the Reformation itself. If every deviation from any given standard, is laid down as excluding men from the benefits of Christ's redemption; if Anabaptists, and Quakers and *Arminians*, as well as Arians, and Socinians, (see p. 246.), are to be denied all participation in the covenant of mercy, then, even the Christian church itself is little better than one vast Aceldama, and we may exclaim of others and of ourselves, "Who then can be saved?"

But, as if aware that he was carrying these exclusive principles too far, this writer proceeds "to shew, what success the Gospel has more lately had, and what success it has had in these latter times of the reformed church." This success he arranges under three heads. "First, reformation in doctrine and worship, in countries called Christian. Secondly, propagation of the Gospel amongst the Heathen. Thirdly, revival of religion, in the power and practice of it." p. 247.

With regard to the first, he adverts merely to the civilization of Russia by Peter the Great; as if the souls of the Russians could have been affected by the improvements of naval tactics, or by any other similar refinements. But, even supposing this to be the case,

who does not see, that their responsibility must have increased together with the progress of their knowledge?

As to the second, "the propagation of the Gospel amongst the Heathen," he first notices its progress in America, "where it is certain, that the devil did quietly enjoy his dominion over the poor nations of the Indians for many ages," p. 248. He adverts also to the labours of our missionaries, on the coasts of Malabar, and to the pious exertions of Herman Frank; and if he had lived to these times, he might have spoken, in far higher terms, of the conversion of the Heathen in various quarters of the globe. But, without wishing, in any degree, to depreciate the value of these missionary exertions, I must be allowed to say, that, their success is *even now* very partial, if compared with the whole surface of the habitable world. So little impression has been made on Mahomedan countries, that even, at this moment, the number of Mahomedans is almost equal to that of Christians. Nearly the whole of Africa, the greater part of Asia, and a large portion of America remain under the exclusive dominion of Paganism. In Christendom, the Romish church still retains an immense majority; and the adherents of the Greek church are, at least, equal to the Protestants in their numbers. I mention these facts, not for the purpose of undervaluing our advantages, but of manifesting the nature and extent of the argument. The cause which I have been advocating, on the part of the Heathen, is, in truth, the cause of every individual of the human race, "Barbarian, Scythian, bond or

free." Unless we apply these equitable and comprehensive principles to individuals of all ages and countries, of all tongues and kindreds, there can be no hope for the great majority of mankind, and then, none, but the Calvinist, can find pleasure in contemplating the history of the world.

But, it is the beauty and perfection of this argument, that it can be accommodated to every variety of light and shade, and that it can suit the savage wandering in his woods, or a Newton grasping the laws of the universe. Whilst it leaves each individual strictly responsible for what he enjoys, and is therefore as far removed from deistical indifference, as from philosophic presumption; it teaches us, *that the* mercy of God, towards penitent sinners, can be administered only through the scheme of Christ's redemption. "There is no other name given under heaven whereby we may be saved." And thus it connects the whole series of human events with the importance of the Gospel dispensation, and exhibits the whole reign of Providence, as inlaid and identified with the glories of Christ's kingdom. With these sentiments, I close this review of Edwards's History of Redemption, by appropriating his concluding reflections, as exactly suited to *our* view of the Christian dispensation.

"Here we may see what a consistent thing Divine Providence is. The consideration of what has been said, may greatly serve to shew us the consistency, order, and beauty of God's works of providence. If we behold these events in any other view, it will all look like confusion; like a number of jumbled events coming to pass

without any order or method; like the tossing of the waves of the sea; things will look as though one confused revolution came to pass after another, merely by blind chance, without any regular, or certain end.

"But, if we consider the events of Providence, in the light which they have been set before us under this doctrine, and in which the Scriptures set them before us, they appear far from being jumbled and confused, an orderly series, all wisely ordered, and directed, in excellent harmony and consistence, tending to one end. The wheels of Providence are not turned round by blind chance, but they are full of eyes round about, as Ezekiel represents, and they are guided by the Spirit of God; where the Spirit goes, they go, and all God's works of providence, through all past ages, meet in one at last, as so many lines meeting in one centre."

"It is with God's works of providence, as it is with his works of creation. It is but one work. The events of Providence are not so many distinct, independent works, but they are rather so many different parts of one work, of one regular scheme. They have all one foundation, and are united at last in one top stone.

"God doubtless is pursuing some design, and carrying on some scheme, in the various changes and revolutions which, from age to age, come to pass in the world. It is most reasonable to suppose, that there is some certain great design, to which, Providence subordinates all the great successive changes in the affairs of that world, which God has made. Yet there is nothing

which informs us what this scheme and design of God is, but the Holy Scriptures.

"In the Bible, we have an account of the whole scheme of Providence, from the beginning of the world to the end of it, either in history, or prophecy; and are told, what will become of it at last. How rational, worthy, and excellent a Revelation is this! How excellent a book is the Bible, which contains so much beyond all other books in the world! and what characters are there in it, of its being indeed divine—a book, which the great Jehovah has given to mankind for their instruction, without which, we should have been left in miserable darkness and confusion," p. 308—311.

It was my intention to have formed a third Appendix, from a collection of the *hard sayings* of some ancient and modern writers respecting the Heathen; a host of which might have been easily summoned from Missionary Sermons, Registers, and Magazines,—"thick as autumnal leaves in Vallombrosa." But, as I have no wish to provoke needless controversy, nor to expose the injudicious zeal of some excellent men, I shall omit this part of the work. It is impossible for any Christian, not to admire the piety and devotion of those, who hazard their lives, and all their temporal comforts, for the sake of spreading the knowledge of

the Gospel; and I feel myself utterly unworthy of eulogizing those, "whose praise is not of men, but of God." Still, it is deeply to be lamented, that the harsh assertions of Calvinism should have been urged as a motive to excite Christian zeal, in the cause of missions; and that, what is an unquestionable obligation, so far as it is practicable, should have been mingled, with exaggerations, which are altogether incredible. The interests of truth cannot require these monstrous misrepresentations; and while endeavouring to diffuse the knowledge of Christianity abroad, we should be cautious of placing stumbling-blocks in the way of unbelievers at home. If it were true, as has been frequently asserted, that there are now more than *six hundred millions* of Heathen, who are *perishing*, from their ignorance of the Gospel; then, it would be the instant duty of every Christian, to become a Missionary; and the whole of Europe should commence a crusade against Asia, Africa, and America. But I pause—the absurdity of the supposition is its strongest refutation. If it could be proved, the foundation of all religion would be destroyed; the belief of a Providence would be annihilated; and the Atheist, no longer a fool, might loudly exclaim—"*There is no God!*"

I cannot conclude this work, without an earnest appeal to my reader for his support and encouragement of that venerable Society, to which I have ventured to inscribe this volume. When Bishop Butler was advocating the cause of this institution, he urged, as a motive for its support, "that Christianity is to be considered as a *trust*, deposited with us on behalf of

others; on behalf of mankind, as well as for our own instruction*." This particular view of Christianity, it has been one of the leading objects of this work to illustrate. How faithfully this *trust* has been discharged by this excellent Society, its missionary labours, for more than a century, can attest†. We may well survey, with pleasure and delight, an institution, which, in its earlier stages, could boast of a Ziegenbalgh and a Swartz, and which has more recently embalmed with her tears a Middleton and a Heber. But, whilst I pay this homage of unfeigned respect and preference, let me not be thought unfriendly towards other missionary societies, whether amongst Churchmen or Dissenters. *I admire their* zeal, whilst I deplore its extravagance; and can rejoice in their success, even though it be tarnished with sectarianism. Such is the sanctity of the cause, that it can redeem a thousand errors; even Calvinism looks lovely, when conjoined with the spread of Christianity;—for who would criticise the missionary, going forth, as Bishop Hurd depicts him, "with the Bible in his hand, and his Saviour in his heart," to preach the glad tidings of redemption to the Heathen world?

* See his Sermon preached 1738, 1739, before "the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel." *Works*, vol. ii. p. 338.

† See An Account of the Gospel Society, by David Humphreys. Lond. 1730. Also a more recent work, entitled, "Propaganda;" by a member of the Society. Lond. 1819. See, also, The Account of the Danish Missionaries to the East Indies, published by this Society, Lond. 1718; and a more enlarged Account of the East India Mission, published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Lond. 1814.

But, having paid this tribute of Christian charity to other missionary associations, let me again recommend that pure and peaceful Society, whose zeal is untainted with bigotry, and whose piety is unalloyed with fanaticism; a Society, which wants only the fostering aid of British liberality, to enable it to diffuse the blessings of the English Church through all the colonies and dependencies of the British empire.

FINIS.

R. GILBERT, Printer, St. John's Square, London.

ERRATA.

Page 104 *for* confined *read* confirmed
—— 108 *for* Rom. iii. 12, *read* Rom. iii. 1, 2.
—— 166 *for* men's *read* mine
—— 280 *for* council *read* counsel
—— 289 *for* consider *read* considers
—— 294 *for* expression *read* expressions
—— 340 *for* mutifarious *read* multifarious
—— 341 *for* intervoven *read* interwoven
—— 351 *for* to Christian *read* to the Christian

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